

OLD BROADBRIM WEEKLY

FIVE CENTS

OLD BROADBRIM

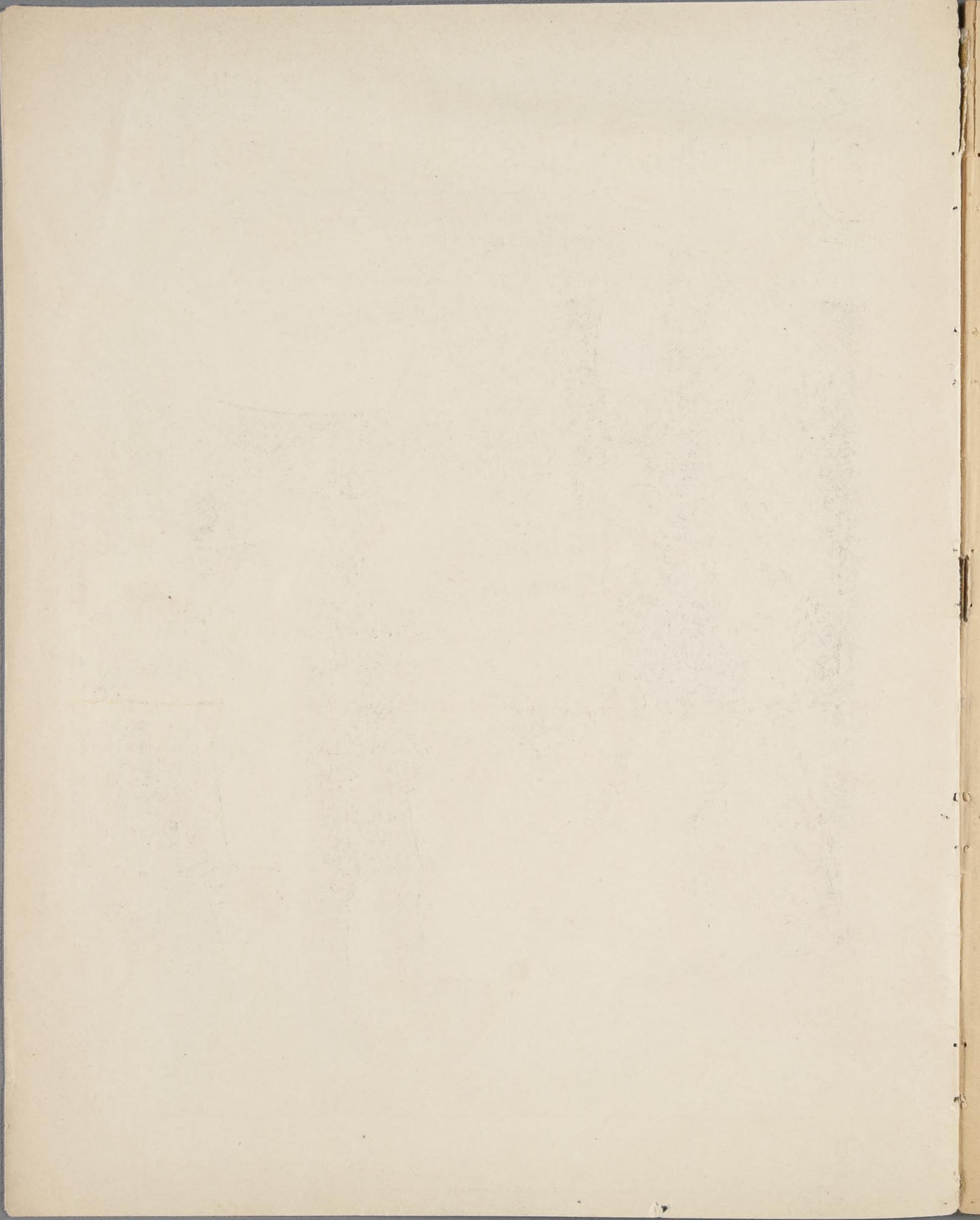
No 14

FIGHTING WESTERN
DESPERADOES



BY
THE AUTHOR OF
"OLD BROADBRIM"—

"I hope we haven't kept you waiting, gentlemen?" said Old Broadbrim, stepping forward. Something about his voice made the newcomers feel uneasy, but before they could say another word, the chief and his men came up and sprang upon them.





OLD BROADBRIM

WEEKLY

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No. 14.

NEW YORK, January 3, 1903.

Price Five Cents.

Old Broadbrim Fighting Western Desperadoes;

OR,

PLAYING THE COUNTERFEIT GAME.

By the author of "OLD BROADBRIM."

CHAPTER I.

A DOUBLE MURDER.

The morning of the thirteenth of December, 189—, was a red-letter day in Josiah Broadbrim's career, as it subsequently proved.

The famous Quaker detective had barely entered his office, and had not yet removed his overcoat and gloves, when an impatient knock was given at the office door.

"Come in!" called out the detective.

As the last word left his lips the door was opened with rather unnecessary violence, it seemed to him, and a district messenger boy entered.

His appearance was followed by a chilling gust of wind. For an instant or two the office was deluged with a shower of snowflakes.

In point of fact, it was snowing hard at the time, and everything outside indicated the setting in of one of your genuine Northwestern blizzards.

Without closing the door the boy began to shake himself of his snowy covering.

"Shut that door!" cried Broadbrim, sharply.

This brought the messenger boy to his senses, and he sent the door to as ordered.

"Anything for me?"

"H'm—yes, sir; a note!"

"Here it is," fishing an envelope from one of his pockets and

handing it to the detective; "from the Pinkerton Agency, Exchange Place.

"Any answer, sir?"

"No," from Old Broadbrim, who had meanwhile torn open the envelope and read the few hastily-scribbled lines it contained.

"No answer, my boy."

"Good-morning. Thanks."

"H'm, rather sharp," grumbled the messenger, "a blanked sight too sharp."

When Broadbrim looked up the boy had banged the door and had hastened downstairs—into the street.

We intimated that there were few lines in the note.

It ran as follows:

"DEAR SIR: Have just received a dispatch from the Chicago agency. If you can undertake a journey West on a case in which there may be some danger as well as profit, call at once. If not return answer per bearer to that effect.

"WILLIAM PINKERTON,
"No. — Exchange Place, New York."

Broadbrim was not long in deciding what to do.

In fact he had decided immediately he glanced at the note.

"I have nothing to detain me in New York just at present," thought he, "and I might as well take a run West as to stay here."

So expressing himself, Broadbrim left some instructions to his clerk and hurried into the street.

It was cold—bitter cold.

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The snow came down in clouds, and, as it was freezing hard, the crystal masses were being swept in all directions by the fierce force of the wind and piled against doors and windows.

A few minutes later Broadbrim presented himself at the door of Mr. Pinkerton's private office and was admitted.

"Ah, good-morning," greeted Mr. William Pinkerton, who had taken his brother Robert's place for the time. "I have been waiting here for you a little impatiently."

"The fact is, I wasn't quite sure whether you would care about undertaking such a journey at this time of the year—and had you not turned up I was going to look somewhere else."

"Of course, we have men at our Chicago agency who would jump at such a chance."

"Then get them," said Broadbrim, independently.

"I'd just as leave spend the holidays in New York as elsewhere."

"Hold on a minute," interrupted William Pinkerton.

"First hear me out, then decide."

"This case will be as good as five thousand dollars to you—three thousand offered by the State—"

"What State?"

"Iowa—and another two thousand dollars from a rich relative of one of the murdered men."

"Is it a murder case?"

"Yes."

"In the State of Iowa?"

"In the State of Iowa," repeated Mr. Pinkerton, succinctly.

"But sit down till I tell you all about it, and then you'll be the better able to judge whether to engage in it or not. First take a cigar; a man who smokes can be more attentive and not interrupt so much, which I find to be a bad habit in most people."

"I do not include you, of course," proceeded Mr. Pinkerton, laughing, "for you Quakers never interrupt—that is, only occasionally."

"Rather a left-handed compliment to Quakers," said Broadbrim, as he took and lit a cigar.

"Now fire away, and let me hear what it's about."

"Very well, then, I'll begin.

"For many years," pursued William Pinkerton, settling back in his chair, "the State of Iowa has been in a chronic condition of robbery, bloodshed and wholesale depredations of every kind."

"This state of things is mainly due to a desperate gang who have their base of operations on the banks of the Mississippi—below the city of Clinton, some six or seven miles."

"Now follow me as nearly as you can while I give the details, so far as are known, of their latest crime."

"On the night of the twenty-ninth of November last," pursued Pinkerton, "a barbarous and bloody murder was committed."

"In order to let some light on the matter, I must go back to the twenty-ninth of the previous August, and to make this more clear, a Mr. Abram Hanson and his son-in-law emigrated from Ohio, located in Lee County, and offered to pay cash for a good farm."

"It was reported that Mr. Hanson was possessed of a large sum of money, and at once he was marked as a prey by the gang of outlaws. A few days after the farm had been purchased, two strangers appeared in the neighborhood, who said that they had just moved into that part of the country, and were searching for a horse they had lost."

"They described the animal, and made particular inquiries as well as indirect ones about the farmers of the place."

"As they appeared to be respectable, law-abiding men, no suspicion was aroused, and they stayed at a small farmer's about a quarter of a mile from Hanson's one night, and next morning

went to Hanson's and tried to get a bank note changed, alleging that they wanted this done to pay for their lodging, etc.

"Though the bill was one of large denomination, Hanson, a very obliging man, at once complied, and perhaps in the changing of the bank note displayed more money than he should have done."

"However, he thought nothing further of the occurrence."

"And now we come again to the night of the twenty-ninth of November—several months later."

"Between twelve and one on that night three men entered the house of Hanson, armed with pistols, knives and clubs."

"In the house at the time were Mr. and Mrs. Hanson, his son-in-law and his wife."

"Strange as it may seem, these people slept in one large room, each bed curtained off, to give it greater privacy from the others."

"On entering the apartment, one of the intruders opened a dark lantern, the light of which flashed on the bed occupied by Hanson's son-in-law and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Percy."

"Mr. Percy, a light sleeper at any time, was aroused at once."

"He sprang up, but before he could do anything further two of the intruders rushed forward."

"Then one aimed a deadly blow with his club at him, injuring him severely, but not so as to keep him from springing to his feet before receiving a second blow."

"The cries of Percy and his wife aroused Hanson, who sprang out of bed instantly, and went to the aid of his son-in-law."

"Then a desperate struggle ensued between the four men, all of which was done in the dark, for the third ruffian, who held the lantern, shot to the slide, after which he went to the assistance of his comrades."

"For several minutes the struggle continued amid the cries and shrieks of the terrified women and the groans of their husbands, as they were stabbed and cut by the knives which the assassins used, while they, unarmed, sought to repel them, and struggled hopelessly for life."

"Hanson, old as he was, was not only a powerful but a brave man. He met the ruffian who attacked him unflinchingly, and by a desperate effort at last succeeded in forcing his assailant from the house."

"But this effort of the brave farmer was met by a knife thrust which pierced his heart."

"With scarcely a groan, poor old Hanson was a corpse."

"In the meantime Percy succeeded in throwing one of the ruffians on the floor, and while in the act of choking him the knife of the other was inflicting deep gashes upon his head and back."

"But even in this terrible extremity he still had hope, and with one desperate effort he freed himself from their hold and gained his feet."

"One more effort and he forced them through the open door and tried to close it."

"But while doing so a pistol shot rang out, and Percy reeled and fell to the ground with a bullet in his breast."

"The assassins, becoming alarmed at the way in which they had been met, and fearing the shrieks of the women and the report of the pistol shot might alarm the neighborhood, left without securing their booty."

"As soon as the family had recovered sufficiently," pursued Pinkerton, "they dispatched a messenger to the nearest town, called West Point, where the district court was in session."

"The news of the double murder created great excitement, and a large number of citizens, together with the sheriff of the county, repaired at once to Hanson's farmhouse, where a horrible spectacle met them."

"In the front yard and within a few feet of the door, lay

Mr. Hansen, literally hacked to pieces, the ground stained for a considerable distance with his blood.

"Entering the house, they found Percy lying on the floor, apparently in the agonies of death.

"Everything presented at a glance a scene of the most horrible butchery.

"Surgical aid was procured, but uselessly, for on examination the wounds Percy had received were pronounced mortal.

"The skull was pierced and fractured by the strokes of the deadly knife, which at last had deeply buried itself in the unfortunate victim's back.

"The ball received on the doorstep was extracted, after having passed almost through his body and become flattened against the bones.

"He did not live more than a few hours after the bullet was extracted," pursued Pinkerton.

"But he lived long enough to give an indefinite description of one of his assailants, which may or may not be of use."

"Have you this description?" questioned Broadbrim.

"No; the sheriff of Lee County has, though. But I don't fancy it will amount to anything."

"Why not?"

"It is, as I said before, so indefinite.

"Percy was too far gone to give a description which would have much weight.

"However, that will be for you to judge when you get there—that is, providing you are willing to take the case in hand."

"I have already decided," said Broadbrim.

"What is the name of the sheriff of Lee County?" he asked later.

"Bronson E. Lewis."

"Is he a reliable man?"

"Report says that he is."

"As I am not personally acquainted with him, of course I can't say.

"But I have not done yet," said William Pinkerton, "and if you will allow me I will go on and finish.

"Well, every effort was made by Mr. Lewis and others to arrest the murderers and bring them to justice.

"The news spread like wildfire, as was to be expected, and the particulars were soon in everybody's mouth.

"The citizens of the surrounding country turned out *en masse*, organized themselves into posses, and searched high and low, in the hope of obtaining some clew to the murderers.

"In searching the farmhouse a cloth cap, trimmed with fur, was found.

"The peak, or front-piece, which had been originally attached to the cap, was missing.

"This was one clew which might lead to the identifying of the murderers, besides the very vague description given by poor Percy, which, as I have said previously, was worth little or nothing.

"Then tracks were found leading from the farmhouse across a plowed field in the direction of a place called Newtown.

"These were followed by Sheriff Lewis to within a few miles of the town mentioned, when all traces were lost."

CHAPTER II.

A HARD TASK.

"Then that ended it as far as Lewis was concerned?" chimed in Broadbrim, who had been listening intently.

"Not quite," replied Pinkerton, smiling.

"The news of the double murder reached a place called

Montrose, where a some-time-retired detective friend of mine has been living for many years.

"This was about ten o'clock on the morning of the murder.

"Sheriff Lewis made it a point to call on my friend Jeffreys at once, and obtain his assistance and advice.

"Soon Jeffreys got a number of the townspeople together, after which the search for the murderers became general.

"Every ravine, thicket and bluff was scoured for a day or two, when the citizens returned discouraged to their homes, believing that the assassins had escaped and would never be caught.

"Having heard of the cap which had been found at the farmhouse, with a full description of it, Jeffreys at once recollects having seen a young man in Newtown with a cap of the same description.

"He communicated this information immediately to Sheriff Lewis with the name of the wearer, which he ascertained to be Rideout, a member of a somewhat disreputable family living on the outskirts of that town.

"In the meantime Jeffreys discovered several persons standing about the streets of Montrose, eagerly listening to all the plans and movements which had been hit upon as a means of bringing the assassins, whoever they were, to justice, and anxious to hear who, if any, was suspected.

"The excitement having passed away and the sheriff's posse dispersed, and all had again become quiet, Jeffreys resolved to track up, as the first step toward an arrest, the fur-trimmed cap, minus the peak or front-piece.

"He immediately left for Newtown on the afternoon of the second of December, and began such inquiries as would tend to remove or confirm the suspicions against the Rideouts, and found that three of the Rideouts, Amos, William and Stephen, were living together, as I have previously said, in a retired part of the town.

"Amos being married, the others boarded with him, and all were without the means of any visible subsistence.

"That on the afternoon of the twenty-ninth of November, William and Stephen Rideout and Thomas Browne were seen passing up in a skiff toward the mouth of Deadman's Creek, in the direction the murder was committed, and that early the following morning Stephen was seen going from the river toward his home bareheaded, and since that time had worn a hat, although he had previously worn a cap."

"That was clew enough," interrupted Broadbrim, "to arrest the man."

"Stop a moment," said William Pinkerton, "I am not through yet."

"On the thirtieth Stephen Rideout was seen in a grocery in Newtown with a drop of blood on the bosom of his shirt, and on being questioned in regard to it made no reply, but went immediately away and returned with a clean one.

"These circumstances," pursued Pinkerton, "more than confirmed the suspicions already excited in the description of the cap."

"All this Jeffreys learned in pursuing his investigations, and soon determined to arrest the two Rideouts and Browne."

"Acting on this he called on the town marshal, and made known to him his business and asked his assistance.

"The marshal promptly consented to aid him."

"They're a desperate lot," he said, "and we have for some time suspected that they are in some way connected with a desperate gang, and that many of the robberies that have taken place hereabouts have been due to their handiwork. But as nothing could be proved against them, we have been at a loss how to act."

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"But the case is now different, for we have something to go on."

"Precisely," returned Jeffreys.

"There is not the remotest doubt but the two Rideouts and Browne have had a hand in the murders of Hanson and Percy."

"The marshal at once got together a posse of armed men, and at two o'clock on the morning of the third of December they proceeded to the residence of the Rideouts and surrounded the house.

"The marshal rapped at the door, but no attention was paid to it.

"A slight noise was heard in the house, and a light flashed through a window of one of the lower rooms. Jeffreys crept up to the window and looked in.

"He saw three men in the apartment, which was large and low-ceiled.

"Before the summons at the door could be repeated one of the men put a murderous-looking knife beneath his coat, and stepping to the door, demanded:

"Who is there?"

"I am," replied the marshal.

"And who the mischief are you?" came the next question.

"The marshal."

"What do you want?"

"To come in, of course."

"You'll have to call in daylight. You can't come in now," was the decisive reply.

"But I wish to see you," persisted the marshal.

"The first one who attempts to enter is a dead man," was the significant rejoinder.

"But I wish to speak to you."

"What business have you here at this time of night?"

"The citizens of Montrose have come over here to arrest you, and I determined to get the start of them. You shall have a fair trial if you surrender. Will you do so?"

"What is the charge?"

"Not much," replied the marshal. "A little horse-stealing, that's all."

"This policy the marshal thought the best he could adopt under the circumstances, considering that he had only three men and my friend Jeffreys with him, while from the house they could be fired on with murderous effect—for all is fair in this sort of game," smiled Pinkerton.

"Well, and what was the outcome?" asked Broadbrim.

"The marshal was told to wait until morning and they would surrender."

"And they accepted the proposition?"

"Yes. After a few minutes' consultation, the marshal and his friends agreed to wait till daylight, guarding the house, of course, to prevent all escape.

"Daylight came at last and the marshal rapped at the door, when Amos Rideout opened it, and the three brothers surrendered without further resistance.

"Then they were informed what they were arrested for, a fact which did not appear to trouble them much.

"In short, they seemed to look on the whole thing as a huge joke, as though in no way alarmed at the result.

"They were taken before a justice of the peace, who agreed to hold them in custody until Jeffreys could go to Montrose to notify Sheriff Lewis and return again.

"The Rideouts manifested no uneasiness, and made no objection to their detention.

"Jeffreys left Newtown on the morning of the third and pro-

ceeded to Montrose to notify the sheriff of the arrest, who later returned with several citizens.

"Then Sheriff Lewis made affidavit for a warrant, which being issued, they were legally arrested and remanded for examination; but as no evidence was adduced against Amos Rideout he was discharged.

Browne, who was also strongly suspected, fled before sufficient evidence could be found against him to justify his arrest.

"And this is how matters now stand," ended William Pinkerton.

"With two of the brothers in jail?" said the Quaker.

"Exactly!"

"But I don't quite see the point," objected Broadbrim.

"Where does the gang come in?"

"Nothing has been proved as to their complicity in the murders, as far as I can see."

"Have they any following in those counties?"

"Yes, a considerable following," replied Pinkerton, and there's where the trouble lies.

"There are hundreds of people in those counties who would screen them, whatever they did—not only the people, but those who are in power."

"Maybe that is the reason that they have escaped scot-free so far."

"Now, what we want you to do is to go out there and take a hand with Jeffreys in bringing the murders of Hanson and Percy home to them."

"Recollect the reward of a total of five thousand dollars is worth trying for, even though you do risk considerable danger."

"I am not thinking of the danger," rejoined Broadbrim, quickly, "nor of the reward."

"I am thinking of what show we will have in such a community in bringing the assassins to justice."

"You yourself own that it will be no child's play, where these desperadoes run things pretty much as they please, to insure a conviction."

"But I am willing to have a go at it and do my best."

"Will you give me a line to Jeffreys?"

"Certainly."

Pinkerton then wrote a letter introducing Broadbrim to his friend.

This he handed him.

"When will you start?"

"To-night."

"Very good, then, go—and good luck to you."

"Do all you can to break up this band of outlaws."

"If you succeed, where so many have failed, it will be a big feather in your hat."

The Quaker detective smiled grimly.

"I'll do my best," he said, then left the office.

When he reached the street the snow was still coming down at a tremendous rate, but the wind had almost ceased.

From this Broadbrim concluded that the back of the snow-storm was broken.

CHAPTER III.

THE INDICTMENT.

On the morning of the fifteenth of December, Old Broadbrim, grip in hand, entered the town of Montrose.

It was a beautiful, clear morning, with not a vestige of snow in the streets.

"The weather is different to when I left New York," communed Broadbrim, "and it would seem as though the late snow-storm had not touched here."

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"If it did, it certainly has left no traces."

Broadbrim was not long hunting up Jeffreys, the retired detective.

In Jeffreys Broadbrim found a jolly-looking man of between fifty and sixty, with iron-gray hair, a strong physique and deep blue eyes.

Jeffreys did not look near his age; and, from Pinkerton's description, Broadbrim was surprised to see a man so well preserved.

The Quaker handed him William Pinkerton's letter.

Jeffreys, after reading it, extended Broadbrim his hand.

"Glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Broadbrim," he said; "and whatever you are pleased to suggest hereafter, in regard to this case, I am at your service."

"I trust this feeling which you have expressed will prevail to the end," said the Quaker.

"Of course, Mr. Pinkerton made known most of the ins and outs of the case?" interjected Jeffreys.

"Oh, yes, he did that."

"Then that will save me from going over the same ground."

"Precisely. Now, Mr. Jeffreys," went on Broadbrim, "be good enough to tell all that took place since the third or fourth of December."

The detectives were in a spacious room overlooking the main street of Montrose.

A flood of sunlight came into the apartment, lighting up the faces of the two men, the serious, thoughtful countenance of Broadbrim and the jolly, prepossessing features of Jeffreys.

These were men who could look into each other's eyes, with an honesty and earnestness of purpose beyond all cavil, while a glance at the same time convinced each of the other's strength.

"Well," began Jeffreys, settling down in his chair and crossing one leg over the other, "I suppose I may as well continue where William Pinkerton left off?"

"Exactly so. His account of the murders goes up to the arrest of the Rideouts, the discharge of Amos for lack of evidence, and the escape of Thomas Browne."

"Very well, then; I'll take up the case from that point," replied Jeffreys.

"After the arrest of the Rideouts, strong efforts were being made constantly to insure their acquittal on the examination, or effect their escape, and a large number of witnesses were called for this purpose, ready to swear that they were in Newtown at the time of Hanson and Percy's murder.

"I take it that Mr. Pinkerton has already explained to you their supposed connection with a band of outlaws?"

Broadbrim nodded.

"With this strong array of testimony in their favor," pursued Jeffreys, "and the strong influence before a magistrate who favored this gang of outlaws, against the circumstantial evidence in our possession, there was little hope of our success to secure a conviction.

"In fact, there was scarcely one who did not look forward to an acquittal, although every circumstance tended strongly to confirm their guilt.

"Under this condition of affairs the case was left in my hands to work it as I thought fit.

"Jeffreys," said the sheriff to me, "you are credited with the arrest of those men, and must conduct the examination.

"But with this strong array of witnesses in their favor, I fear they will get clear, although there is no doubt whatever in my mind of their guilt!"

"Therefore I can't do better than to leave the matter to your skill and judgment."

"And where do you come in, Mr. Lewis?" I asked.

"Are you going to abandon the case?"

"Oh, no; not so bad as that," he replied, "I will help you all I can—to the best of my ability."

"Well, you may be sure, Mr. Broadbrim," continued Jeffreys, "that I didn't esteem my position a very enviable one, so I took a run over to Chicago and consulted my friend, Pinkerton.

"I gave him the full particulars of the murders as far as known, and after some reflection he told me to go ahead, and that he would see to it that I got the help of one of the best detectives in the country.

"But in the meantime I was to keep him informed as to what was going on.

"To this I reluctantly consented, and resolved to make the best of what I had done so far, and, if possible, thwart the plans of these criminals, set at defiance their array of perjured witnesses, and hold the Rideouts to answer before a legal tribunal."

"Affairs are at a pretty pass in this State," interjected Broadbrim, "when one cannot bring in a conviction of red-handed murderers—men against whom the evidence is so conclusive."

"Not quite conclusive, though most circumstantial," corrected Jeffreys.

"However, I got back to Montrose and set to work in earnest on the case.

"I resorted to the following expedient:

"The morning of my arrival back in Montrose, the hour was set for the preliminary examination of the two Rideouts.

"The courtroom, as I expected, was filled with witnesses for the prisoners, and dark indeed was the prospect of a committal.

"Under the pretense of procuring more testimony, I applied for a continuance of the case until the following day.

"This, after much opposition, was granted, and the time set down at ten o'clock the following morning.

"Having gained my point thus far, I resolved to take all our witnesses that were in attendance to Lee County where the grand jury were in session, and procure a bill of indictment.

"Having done this, my purpose was to return to Montrose with a certified copy which would hold the prisoners in spite of the testimony of their friends.

"While Sheriff Lewis and myself were preparing to set out on this mission there arrived in Montrose several witnesses against the Rideouts, some of whom recognized Stephen Rideout as one who had been seen frequently with known members of the gang of outlaws.

"This suggested at once an immediate examination, which suggestion, as you may suppose, came from those in favor of the prisoners.

"I objected to this course, but without assigning any reason, well believing that, if my intentions were known to these people, the escape of the Rideouts would be certain, while their friends now doubted not that they would be sworn clear by their confederates.

"This being so we, without further delay, left for West Point, Lee County, where we arrived in the afternoon, and found the grand jury in session, in compliance with the request of a messenger whom I had previously dispatched.

"The witnesses were at once examined, and a bill of indictment found against Stephen and William Rideout and Thomas Browne for the murder of Hanson and his son-in-law.

"Next day we had got back to Montrose in time to meet the court of examination at the appointed hour.

"We found the streets teeming with excitement; the news, having traveled far and near, had brought hundreds of people

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from Illinois as well as Iowa, the majority of whom were disposed to be friendly to the Rideouts.

"Friends and foes alike were there, and on every face was depicted anxiety, fear, or hope."

"The court was at last convened, and the prisoners arraigned for examination, with a great number of witnesses from Newtown, and defended by an expert lawyer."

Here Jeffreys suddenly stopped, got up quickly from his chair, and, approaching the window, looked out into the street.

"It's nothing," he explained, returning to his seat.

"I fancied for the moment I caught sight of Thomas Browne, one of the alleged murderers—the man who ran away on hearing of the arrest of the Rideouts.

"From where I sat the man resembled him very much.

"But I discovered on going to the window that I was mistaken.

"But to proceed with my story," resumed Jeffreys. "I never saw a courtroom more excited than when I produced my copy of the indictment.

"The place at once became a scene of the utmost confusion.

"The cheers of the friends of justice and the loud curses of the others commingled in one overwhelming din, and riot and bloodshed seemed the inevitable consequence.

"Completely disheartened by this unlooked-for proceeding, and outwitted as they were, the friends of the prisoners quietly submitted.

"I could see a hundred eyes glaring at me, and I well knew what my fate would be if unfortunate circumstances threw me into the power of such people at that moment.

"But I had nerved myself for the ordeal, so that their hostile demonstrations made little impression.

"To guard against all danger and to still, if possible, the excitement, I suggested to the counsel for the prisoners that, notwithstanding they protested their innocence, yet they must answer to the laws of their county under the indictment, and that, if innocent, they would have no fear of the result.

"Their friends, by their hostile demonstrations, can only injure their chances," I said; "and the best you can do is to advise them to go to their homes quietly."

"This view was coincided in by the lawyer, and he at once acted on my suggestion.

"The friends of the prisoners left the court quietly and returned to their homes, satisfied that the counsel's advice was sound.

"That night the Rideouts were safely lodged in jail beyond the hope of rescue or escape, and the minds of the people of the surrounding country became again calm, and business, that had for a time been neglected, was once more resumed.

"Now the man we were most solicitous of arresting," continued Jeffreys after a pause, "was Thomas Browne, he who had got away on the arrest of the Rideout brothers.

"To more quickly effect this a reward of five hundred dollars was offered for his arrest and delivery into my custody in any State or Territory of the Union.

"On the sixth of December a brief note reached me by mail, giving me a clew to the alleged murderer's whereabouts."

"On reaching that town I introduced myself to Sheriff Blackman.

"It happened that in his official capacity he well knew the gang, and was intimately acquainted with most of their proceedings, which enabled him to give me much valuable information.

"It may be as well to explain that the outlaws are probably as well known in a part of Illinois as in Iowa, for in both States they had already committed numerous depredations, which, however, up to this time, could not be brought home to them.

"Sheriff Blackman was acquainted with the general character of Browne, and knew several of his confederates in crime, who lived on the Mississippi bottoms in Adams County, eighteen miles north of Quincy.

"Among them was a man named Nevin, a relative of Browne's, and who had served one term in the penitentiary for larceny.

"So you perceive, Mr. Broadbrim," Jeffreys added, "how widespread was this organization, which was as dangerous to life as it was to property.

"After gathering from Blackman all necessary information and directions, I resolved to visit the gang in the neighborhood of where Nevin lived, and by stratagem learn whether Browne was really there or not—as informed in the note which I had got, and which came from an unknown source."

"Then the writer did not make known his identity?" said Broadbrim.

"No; and that was probably one reason I was half in doubt of its truth.

"However, I set out, and after riding some time came to Nevin's house.

"I introduced myself to him by the name of 'Bentley.'

"Is your name Nevin?" I asked.

"He looked me over for a moment sharply, then drawled out:

"Yes, that is my name, sir."

"I've heard of you, Mr. Nevin," I went on, "and would like to have a little conversation with you. Can you spare the time?"

"Certainly. On what subject?"

"Now the question would have put me in a quandary had I not thought out the matter before, so I at once answered:

"I am just from the eastern part of the State, where I raised (stole) a horse, which I left below for sale, and thought I would come up here and see what was going on in the way of business."

"This appeared to take him, and he answered, regarding me as bad an egg as himself:

"I am glad you called, though we are all idle here at present. The boys up north, however, seem to have their hands full."

"Yes, that is so." I replied; and now having gained his confidence, I put the question:

"Are you doing nothing at all here?"

"Not quite so bad," he replied, grinning.

"They made good raises, though I learn some of the boys have got into a rather serious scrape."

"Not through horses?" said I, with marked interest.

"Oh, no, not through horses," replied he.

"The fact is they attempted to rob an old farmer, and to escape were obliged to murder both him and his son-in-law."

"Serious, truly," said I.

"Yes, but that's not the worst of it."

"Why, is there anything more?"

"Two of them have been arrested, and I understand they're after the third."

"That is bad," I rejoined. "But can't they get clear?"

"I don't know. It is doubtful. They've kicked up the devil's

CHAPTER IV.
OBTAINING POINTERS.

"There might be something or there might be nothing in this clew," pursued Jeffreys, "but I resolved to avail myself of it, so on the seventh of December I set out for Quincy, Illinois.

OLD BROADBRIM WEEKLY.

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bobsey over the matter so far,' he replied, 'and they'll convict the whole gang if they can.'

"Are you acquainted up the river?"

"Not much."

"Do you know which of the boys were arrested for the murder of the farmer and his son-in-law?"

"Two of the Rideouts."

"I suppose they are guilty?"

"No doubt. They're a pair of as hard cases as you can scare up anywhere."

"So that it will go hard with them?" said I.

"Yes; but you can lay your sweet life they won't catch the third."

"What! Is there a third in the affair?" I asked, with affected surprise.

"Sure! One of the toughest I know of."

"He does nothing but follow the business."

"I've seen him go into a store in broad day, steal a big bundle of goods, and light out."

"And he makes a practice of going to St. Louis on one side of the river and coming back the other, raking down both ways—so to speak—killing two birds with the one stone."

"Oh, he's an out and out clipper."

"He must be an old hand, indeed?" I observed.

"Old enough not to be caught."

"He's too smart for that."

"Was he engaged in the murder with the Rideouts?"

"Guess he was."

"I should like to make his acquaintance," I interjected, grimly. "I fancy I could get him into a little work that would suit him."

"I want a partner just now."

"Do you think he would have any objection to take part in an affair that would net him a few thousand dollars?"

"Guess he'd jump at the offer!" cried Nevin.

"In fact, he's ready for anything."

"Does he come here often?"

"Not very."

"I don't think he would suit you, though," added the fellow.

"Why not?"

"Because he's too reckless."

"Now, look here, Nevin," said I, decisively, "I want two of the boys to go to Benton with me."

"What's the racket?"

"To relieve an old fellow of some cash he has no need of—several thousand dollars, in bank notes."

"That would suit Browne to a dot," replied Nevin.

"As to me, I can't do much here; I'm suspected, and have to keep quiet."

"Are you known in Benton?"

"No."

"Then I think, with you and Browne, we could fix the business nicely."

"It would be at least fifteen hundred apiece, anyway, and maybe a few hundreds more."

"Where is Tom Browne now?"

"I don't know where he is."

"But there is a man living about two miles from here who is a tiptop fellow in a speculation of the kind you mention."

"But suppose he couldn't go?" questioned I.

"If he couldn't, there are plenty in this county who would be glad to get the chance."

"This convinced me that Nevin did not know the whereabouts of Browne, so I told him I was obliged to go to Missouri before

I made the strike at Benton, but would call on him when I returned and make some arrangement with him."

"I had got thus far when he pursued the conversation."

"Are you acquainted in Missouri?"

"No, not a great deal."

"I can give you points there, if you want them," said Nevin.

"Of course, I said that such would help me out a good deal."

"Then he went on:

"I've a brother on the Missouri River, who is right side up, and knows all the boys. If you get there, you are safe. Tell him I sent you, and it will be all right."

"Then Nevin gave me this worthy's address, for which I thanked him."

"When you come this way, drop in and see me," said he. "I can secrete you and hide your horse, so that the d—l himself can't find him."

"But if I should want to do a bolt?" I asked.

"In that case, I keep a boat to cross the Mississippi, and can ferry my friends over at night as well as in the daytime, and tell them where they can stop and be secure."

"After wishing me success, and giving me a list of names with whom to stop in Missouri, I left him, and returned to Quincy on the evening of the ninth, and gave Sheriff Blackman the particulars of the interview with Nevin."

"He listened attentively to all I had to say; then asked:

"What do you intend doing now?"

"I came here to hunt up Browne," was the reply, "and I hate to leave until I get some trace of him."

"You don't think Nevin suspected you?"

"I had to laugh at this."

"For, had the man suspected me, he certainly would not have made me such a confidant."

"Of course not," I replied.

"Had he, he wouldn't have spoken as he did."

"Furthermore, I am confident he doesn't know where Browne is."

"If he did, he would have told me, so the three of us could work that supposititious case at Benton."

"That sounds feasible," said Blackman.

"And so you gave Nevin to understand that you are going to Missouri?"

"Yes—and I am almost sorry now that I did," was the reply."

CHAPTER V.

THE VERDICT.

"I remained until the thirteenth of the month in Quincy," went on Jeffreys, "all the while hoping to run across Browne."

"But it was so much time lost."

"Not getting any other clew to the man's whereabouts, excepting that he might be in Missouri, I returned to Montrose, not much the wiser for my journey."

"And that," ended Jeffreys, "is as far as I have gone."

"Is it essential to the case to get at this Browne?" asked Old Broadbrim.

"Yes, it is."

"The reward should be increased to a thousand dollars," ventured the Quaker, "in order to insure his capture."

"It has been increased to three thousand dollars by the State, and two more by a wealthy uncle of Percy's—five thousand in all, as I informed Mr. Pinkerton by wire."

"I should have thought he told you that before you left New York," said Jeffreys.

"Yes, he did."

OLD BROADBRIM WEEKLY.

"Well, what would you advise now?"

"Arrest Browne."

"It's easy to say 'arrest Browne,' but how are we to get at the fellow?"

"I'll tell you how," said Broadbrim.

"You return to Quincy, and keep an eye on Nevin, while I start for Missouri.

"Have you the list which Nevin gave you?"

"Certainly."

"Here it is."

And Jeffreys produced the list of names which Nevin was so obliging as to give him on their parting, as described in the preceding chapter.

"This list will come in handy," said Broadbrim.

That afternoon the Quaker set out for St. Louis.

Here he got traces of Browne, but searched the city for several days without success.

After making such arrangements with the superintendent of police as would insure the arrest of the alleged murderer, if he should be seen in St. Louis, Broadbrim left for Memphis, where he was told by a crook that Browne would most likely be.

Here he again got a clew that Browne had been there a day or two before, but had left for St. Louis.

Broadbrim had nothing to verify this, but, as there might be something in the information, he got back again to St. Louis.

Here the Quaker was doomed to another disappointment.

He was informed by a notorious bank burglar that Browne had been there during his brief absence, and that a private detective of St. Louis, getting track of him, had made an attempt to arrest the man, but unsuccessfully.

Browne, now being on his guard, rendered the task Broadbrim had undertaken still more arduous and doubtful.

But, in nowise discouraged, the Quaker pursued his inquiries, but without, however, gaining any additional information.

While he was away from Montrose, a dispatch had been sent by Sheriff Lewis to Mr. Jeffreys, requesting the return of that gentleman from Quincy.

Other evidence had come to light by which the Rideouts had been tracked from Newtown to the scene of the brutal murders, and back again to that town.

A pistol was found, too, in the Rideouts' house, the butt of which corresponded in size and weight with the one taken from the body of Percy.

Broadbrim was still hunting for Thomas Browne, during which the trial of the Rideouts came on.

Leaving him to pursue his quest of the alleged murderer, we may now return to Montrose.

The morning of the twenty-third of December was the day set apart for the trial of the prisoners.

The case opened with expert counsel on either side.

By a strong chain of circumstantial evidence, a clear case was made out against the prisoners, backed by the testimony of the wives of the murdered men and the statements of other witnesses who had seen the men return to Newtown in the early morning of the twenty-ninth of November.

A vigorous defense was made, but the witnesses for the prisoners could not tell a consistent story, and frequently gave the lie one to the other, though all agreed that they were in Newtown the time the murders were committed.

This alone was sufficient to controvert their testimony in this particular, and also to prove the object for which they were brought there.

Mary Rideout, the wife of Amos, who was in attendance as a

witness, feigned sickness, and was absent from the courtroom, and sent for one of the counsel of the prisoners.

As he entered the room, she burst into tears.

"Must I go to court?" she asked, when she had composed herself somewhat.

"If you can swear the boys were at home on the night of the murders, your testimony will be very material, and cannot be dispensed with."

"Can you swear that?" asked the lawyer.

"They were not at home that night," she replied, after a severe effort between truth and falsehood.

"Do you know where they were?" asked the lawyer.

"They left with Tom Browne, but did not say where they were going."

"When did they come back?"

"Early next morning," answered the woman, after some hesitation.

"Do you know what they went for?" the lawyer questioned.

"They said they went on some business, but had been unsuccessful."

"Did they allude at any time to the murders?"

Again the woman hesitated.

She did not want to lie, and it was plain she did not want to say anything that would conflict with the testimony so far given in favor of the prisoners.

But the counsel, wishing, as far as possible, to get at the facts, put the question again:

"Did they allude at any time to the murders?"

"They said they had a desperate fight, and were afraid they had killed somebody."

"Now, Mrs. Rideout," pursued the counsel, confidentially, "you need not fear me, you know."

"Whatever you say is in the strictest confidence, and whatever is prejudicial to the prisoners will be eliminated from the evidence; you understand?"

"Yes, sir," replied Mrs. Rideout, tearfully.

"Well, now, what is their business?"

"Robbery is the only one I know of," replied Mrs. Rideout, now assured that she could speak to the lawyer as she could to a friend.

"Who are engaged with them?"

"All their father's family, and many prominent citizens encourage them, and share the spoils."

"Well, now, about the prominent citizens—what of them?"

"This, I suppose, is only hearsay?" said the lawyer, quietly.

"I couldn't prove it, of course, but I knew it, sir," answered the woman.

"I know, too, that they want me to swear my brother-in-law clear."

"They have always been kind to me, yet I cannot swear my soul to eternal perdition, and destroy all my hopes of happiness here and hereafter to save them."

"Cannot you prevent me from going to court?" pleaded Mrs. Rideout.

"I don't know yet," replied the lawyer.

"I cannot, will not, do it!" cried the woman, impetuously.

"I cannot swear for them, and I will not swear against them."

After this, the prisoner's legal representative returned again to court, more than ever convinced of the hopelessness of his case, though he still struggled hard to the very end.

His efforts were in vain, however, for after much time consumed in the trial it was brought to a close by a verdict of "guilty of murder in the first degree."

CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER OUTRAGES.

While Old Broadbrim was away hunting for the elusive Browne, another murder took place, within gunshot of the banks of the Mississippi River.

The victim was an old sawmill proprietor named Banks.

Mr. Banks was alone in his house when the robbers entered, the family and servants having gone to a *fête* in the next town.

After their departure he had seated himself in the parlor reading his newspaper.

His attention was attracted by hearing a faint noise in the vicinity of an old well on the homestead.

This did not alarm him, as he supposed it was made by some one engaged in drawing water from the well.

Presently, hearing a louder noise than before, Mr. Banks got up from his chair, and was proceeding to ascertain the cause of it, when the door was suddenly pushed open and three men confronted him.

Before a word was uttered, the foremost of the assassins discharged a pistol at the old man.

The bullet passed through Mr. Bank's left thigh, and, as he turned to grasp a heavy stick which stood near him, the three men rushed forward, pinioned his arms and legs; then they dragged him into a room upstairs containing his safe.

Not having the combination of the safe, they forced the sawmill owner, by the most terrible threats, to open it.

When he had done so, they abstracted the contents, after which they dragged him into another room, placed him on a bed, and with horrible threats demanded more money.

Mr. Banks pointed, with a feeble hand, to a drawer in a dressing-table near by.

The robbers in their hurry missed the drawer containing the money, and opened one in which they found nothing of value.

Enraged at their failure, and believing that their helpless victim meant to deceive them, they beat and choked him till he became unconscious.

They then proceeded to recall his senses by dashing water into his face, and, when poor Banks was brought to, again demanded money.

The poor man, unable to speak, motioned to the drawer, which they again mistook.

This failure enraged them more than ever, and once more the unfortunate sawmill owner, subjected to the same strangling process, fell back insensible.

The assassins, having found between seven and eight hundred dollars in money, a valuable watch and chain and other articles, fled precipitately, as if under the influence of some sudden fear, leaving the rooms splashed with blood and their victim apparently dead.

The first discovery of the outrage was made by two men passing down the Mississippi in a boat.

When opposite Mr. Banks' homestead, they heard a cry of murder.

They did not wait to hear the cry repeated, but rowed in to shore, and hastened to the house.

On entering, they found the unfortunate sawmill owner weltering in his blood.

The apartment was splashed with blood in every direction.

They presently ascertained that Mr. Banks was not quite dead, and one of the men went in search of a doctor, leaving his comrade to minister to the wants of the dying man meanwhile.

By the time the doctor arrived, Mr. Banks was somewhat re-

stored by the assistance rendered him, and able, in a disjointed way, to detail the circumstances of the attack.

A few hours later he died in great agony.

Before his death, the dying man described his murderers—one as being a small, slightly-built man; the second, a short, thick-set, squarely-built fellow; the third, powerful and muscular-looking, about forty, with bushy whiskers, and curly, black hair.

His description of their features was sufficiently minute, notwithstanding its incoherency, to excite suspicion of any person in the neighborhood; but, so far, the descriptions did not answer to any one known.

Great exertions were subsequently made to apprehend the murderers.

A reward of five hundred dollars was offered by the murdered man's family for their arrest.

Printed descriptions were sent out broadcast, describing the watch and a part of the money, with as accurate an account as could be given of the appearance and general character of the assassins, as described by their victim on his deathbed.

Posses were organized, the country was scoured in every direction, and a night watch kept up, but all to no purpose.

Day after day the search was continued.

But not the slightest clew could be obtained.

The alarm spread far and wide, but the assassins had made good their escape, with no living witness able to identify them.

About a week after the murder of Banks, Old Broadbrim had returned, disappointed and dejected, to Montrose, having lost all trace of the man for whom he was searching.

It was the same useless chase, going from town to town, meeting a little encouragement here, and an additional clew there—which, however, in the end amounted to nothing.

"There is no doubt but Browne is somewhere in the West," he said to Jeffreys; "and there is as little doubt but I'll lay hands on him, sooner or later; but what annoys me is this running about to no purpose."

"The organization is more powerful and widespread than one can possibly dream of."

Following this, Broadbrim was sent for by Sheriff Lewis.

This was on the fifth day of February.

"Never mind about Browne for the present, Mr. Broadbrim," began the sheriff.

"His arrest, as you appear to think, can only be a matter of time, and in that I concur with you."

"Here is other game which may finally lead to the apprehension of Browne, and the breaking up of the gang."

"Don't be discouraged."

"Everything will come out all right in the end, if we only push the matter."

"It now requires vigorous action and shrewdness—nothing more."

"On the principle—live, horse, till you get grass," interjected Broadbrim, dryly.

"Well, now, what is the next wild-goose chase you want me to start on?"

Sheriff Lewis detailed the circumstances of Mr. Banks' murder.

"I want you," said he, "to bring the assassins to justice—and with this description, I am assured you will."

"Look over this printed slip at your leisure."

"But first let me say that I suspect two of the witnesses in the Rideout case as being the murderers of Mr. Banks. Their names are Long and Fox, and I think you have seen them; at least, Jeffreys told me that he pointed them out to you."

This was the truth.

Jeffreys had done so.

OLD BROADBRIM WEEKLY.

"There is another man whom I also suspect," went on the sheriff. "He goes, sometimes, I understand, by the name of Belcher."

"Where do you suppose these men are?" asked Broadbrim.

"I think you will find them somewhere in the neighborhood of Quincy, Illinois—they are the associates of the man Nevin, of whom you have heard Mr. Jeffreys speak."

"Don't you think that properly Jeffreys' own case?" said Broadbrim, objecting.

"No."

"Why?"

"Jeffreys is known to Nevin, and I want to send some one who is not known."

"I will give you a letter to Sheriff Blackman; he will help you all he can."

The letter was written, and that day Broadbrim left for Quincy, hoping something tangible would be the outcome.

He saw Blackman, and obtained all the information that that gentleman could give, which, plainly speaking, was not quite up to Broadbrim's expectations.

However, the Quaker made the most of it.

It first necessitated a journey to Keokuk; but, getting no track of the murderers, he returned to Quincy.

His next journey was to Rock Island.

Here he ascertained the names of many of the gang, and other information relative to them.

He also learned that Long, Fox, and Belcher (the supposed assassins of Mr. Banks) were in the habit of stopping with a man who went by the nickname of Old Devil's-hoof, whose house was appropriately located near Devil's Creek, some twenty miles from Montrose.

Not alone this, but Broadbrim discovered that Old Devil's-hoof kept a general rendezvous for the outlaws.

There were four men seen at Devil's-hoof shortly following the murder of Mr. Banks, and had soon after taken their departure for Missouri.

One of these men was called Edward Birch, and answered to the description of the man who had shot the sawmill owner.

Upon the strength of the description, Broadbrim brought the whole force of his investigations to bear on Birch.

Further inquiries revealed the fact that Birch was no other than Belcher.

As yet, however, nothing tangible could be discovered to warrant these men's arrest, with any probability of their conviction, unless the money or watch could be found on them.

But events shape themselves somehow, in spite of evidence.

Broadbrim, having ascertained all he could in this particular direction, returned to Montrose.

The next day after his return, a man named Carter came into Montrose, with a splendid span of horses for sale.

It was suspected that Carter was a member of the gang.

Broadbrim took occasion to converse with Carter frequently, and, not being known as a detective, partly gained his confidence.

They drank together, and the Quaker conducted himself as an old-time crook, hailing from Illinois.

After many allusions to the various operations of the outlaws, in a manner calculated to leave the impression that he was of the "right stripe," he at length ventured to mention the names of the men suspected of having murdered old Mr. Banks.

The longer Carter was in Broadbrim's company, the more open and above board he was with him.

"Ah," said Carter, "you are acquainted with Fox, are you?"

"Bet yer life," replied Broadbrim, enthusiastically. "I'm acquainted with all of 'em."

CHAPTER VII.

WINNING A CONFIDENCE.

This assertion of Broadbrim's went a great way with Carter.

"Then I might say you are almost one of us," said the man.

"You're not far wrong there, comrade," the detective rejoined, warmly, "and I can't see for the life of me why men of the right stripe can't stick together, and then there would be less chance for interlopers to come in."

"That's so," replied Carter, reflectively.

"Where is Fox now?" Broadbrim questioned, leading the crook to make admissions.

"I don't know exactly."

"I've not seen him for some time."

"And Long?" ventured Broadbrim.

"Nor Long, either."

"The last time I saw them was in the upper part of Missouri."

"That was two months ago."

"Are you acquainted with Old Devil's-hoof?"

"Only by reputation."

"I have frequently heard the boys speak of him and his sons, and, from all accounts, they're bang-up members."

"But personally, I don't know them."

"You ought to."

"I think you might learn where some of the boys are by going to Old Devil's-hoof's."

"They usually stop with him when in this vicinity," Broadbrim added.

"Where does the old man live?"

"Near Devil's Creek, about twenty miles from here."

"I would like to see some of them," said Carter.

"I used to travel with them, but Fox and I have had a little falling out about some stuff we once owned, so I concluded to separate, and let him and the others go to the d—l, their own gait, while I went mine."

"What 'stuff' was it?" the Quaker carelessly asked.

"Oh, some goods we had up the river."

"Fox went South at the time, while I stayed behind, to dispose of the goods—d'yee see?"

"When he returned, he insisted that I did not account for all I had sold."

"I would not allow this, of course, so we separated, and since then I've not had much to do with him."

"And yet I would like to see some of the lads, though," he added.

"Then you had better go out to Devil's-hoof's, and no doubt you will see them," replied Broadbrim.

"But you needn't mention my name, as I'm not personally acquainted with the old man, and he might conclude something was wrong."

"That's so, too. So I won't allude to you in any way."

"I guess I know how to satisfy him that I'm all right."

Saying this, Carter left, and soon after started for Old Devil's-hoof's.

He had been gone about two days, when Broadbrim met him again on the street.

"I see you've got back," said the Quaker, with a cordial shake of the hand.

"Yes," replied Carter, "I have got back."

"What luck did you have?"

"The very best."

"Did you run across any of the boys?"

"No, but I heard all about them."

"Let's go somewhere, and I will tell you."

"This saloon is a good place," pointing to an ordinary-looking rumshop nearby.

"Yes, and kept by a man who minds his own business, too," said Broadbrim, warmly.

"Just the gentleman for my money," said Carter, laughing.

"It's rare to find a man of that kind in this work-a-day world."

"Yes, indeed," coincided Broadbrim.

And, with this, he led Carter into the saloon.

After the drinks, the crook resumed, as follows:

"I found out a good deal," he said.

Then, lowering his tone:

"D—n it, man, they're the ones who killed old Banks!"

"The boys?"

"Yes."

"Who told you that?"

"Devil's-hoof"

"Gave you all the particulars, eh?"

"Yes."

"H'm!" interjected Broadbrim, musingly. "I should have thought he'd have kept close about that affair."

"But how did you worm yourself so into his confidence?"

"I will tell you."

"When I first got there, the old fellow was a little scared of me."

"Then I up and told him who I was, and he recollects hearing the boys speak of me."

"So, becoming satisfied that I was right, he told me all—gave a full and complete account of the whole transaction, in fact."

"He must have trusted you a good deal when he did that," said Broadbrim, gravely. "It's not every one he would trust in that way."

"No, I guess not," Carter answered. "The fact is, he took to me at once, as though I had been all my life acquainted with him."

"Well, all I can say to you," warned Broadbrim, "is to keep a close mouth, or the boys will get into trouble. What is Devil's-hoof's history of the affair?"

"This: Fox, Lang, and Belcher, together with a man named Jackson, started from Old Devil's-hoof to rob Banks, and, when they got back with their booty, they buried the watch and money in the old fellow's wheatfield."

"They remained at Devil's-hoof's until they received information that Banks was dead, then lit out."

"Where are they now?"

"They returned to Missouri, but Devil's-hoof doesn't know exactly where they are at this time."

"They're safe, anyway, I suppose?" said Broadbrim.

"Trust them for that."

"They're acquainted all through the country, and have lots of friends, who would keep them hid for a twelvemonth, if need be."

"How did they learn that Banks was dead?" questioned the Quaker again.

"Jackson, Long, and one of the sons of Old Devil's-hoof went over to Newtown, and, while there, saw a circular describing three of them, the watch, and a part of the money."

"They returned to the old man's, told the news, and lit out that night."

This intelligence, connected with certain matters previously brought to light, confirmed Broadbrim's opinion of the guilt of Long, Fox, and Belcher.

Also the guilt of the man Jackson, and Old Devil's-hoof and his sons, as accessories.

Still, there was not a particle of direct evidence, so much remained to be done.

Sheriff Lewis and Detective Jeffreys were informed of the facts elicited by Broadbrim's conversation with Carter, but, of course, of this the general public knew nothing, and were not likely to know for some time.

Soon after the foregoing, a letter came from a man named Fisher, of Rock Island, in which he spoke of information obtained relative to that portion of the outlaw band who infested the country in and around Silverton.

Developments had been made by a late member of the gang by which it was found that Birch, or Belcher, was their acknowledged leader.

The description of Birch, or Belcher, in this letter accorded fully with the one already given.

He frequently made a temporary abiding place of the residence of a man named Harkins, in Iowa, six or seven miles above Clinton, on the Mississippi River.

Broadbrim, having continued his investigations in the vicinity of Newtown and Montrose, obtained additional items of importance.

Yet, so far, he was unable to point to even one bit of testimony that would legally prove the assassins' guilt before a court and jury.

The description given by Mr. Banks, of itself, could avail nothing.

The fact of their participating in other crimes had nothing to do with the case now under consideration, and any indirect information drawn from members of the gang could not, of course, be brought forward as competent evidence.

And this is exactly how the case stood when Broadbrim again visited Rock Island, and held a consultation with the authorities of that place.

In this consultation, the subject was viewed in two lights.

They must either abandon all hope of bringing the murderers to justice, submit quietly to the ravages of the outlaws, and suffer themselves, friends, and neighbors to share the fate of Hanson, Percy, and Banks; or, on the other hand, the most earnest and determined effort must be made to break up this gang of robbers and assassins.

"This can be accomplished in one way," said Broadbrim, when they had got through.

"Let some one present elect to get admitted as a member of the gang; obtain their full confidence, and, by searching out and connecting facts, finally secure the arrest and conviction of those against whom crime could be proved."

"But who will succeed in joining this band of criminals?" asked one.

"I will make the attempt," replied Broadbrim, promptly.

"Jeffreys would take the risk, but he is too well known."

"Well, how are you going to worm your way into the band?" questioned another.

"That you must leave me to determine," returned the Quaker.

After this consultation, Broadbrim hastened to Chicago.

On reaching the city, he called on William Pinkerton, and detailed to him his plan of action.

"I mean connecting myself with the band, as a counterfeiter," he said, "and I want you to get me the stuff, so I will look as good as my representations."

Pinkerton accompanied him to a bank, the president of which was an intimate friend, and aided Broadbrim in obtaining blank sheets of bank notes, by the possession of which he hoped to decoy the gang into full confidence.

The day following his visit to Pinkerton, Broadbrim went to Galena, Illinois.

OLD BROADBRIM WEEKLY.

He had heard that Mr. Banks' watch might be traced to the possession of a certain man, living on the outskirts of that town.

He at length found the man who was said to be in possession of the stolen watch.

This man kept a small hotel, in one of the suburbs of Galena, and was reported to be in some way connected with the gang.

Broadbrim's object was to introduce himself to this fellow as a counterfeiter, and through his agency get himself initiated a member of the outlaw band in that section of the State.

Once he succeeded in this, he had no doubt of the outcome.

CHAPTER VIII.

OLD BROADBRIM AS A COUNTERFEITER.

The hotel owner's name was Reynolds.

"Mr. Reynolds," began Broadbrim, with the freedom and cordiality of Western life, "I have your name from a source which I think entitles me to approach you in a confidential manner.

"Have you a private room where we could have a quiet little chat together?"

Reynolds looked at Broadbrim a moment, as though weighing up the reasonableness of the request.

Then, appearing satisfied, from the scrutiny, he said:

"Yes; follow me."

And, with that, he led him into his own room.

"Well, what is the nature of your business?" he asked, looking at the detective sharply.

Broadbrim produced a bundle of bank bills from a satchel which he carried, the "stuff" obtained for him by Pinkerton.

"Look over these," he said, as he handed the package to Reynolds.

"What do you think of them?"

We have omitted to state that Reynolds was supposed to deal largely in such "goods" himself, therefore was the easier to approach.

After a long and critical examination, the landlord replied:

"They are very good, but I think the paper is a little thinner than is usual with such stuff."

Broadbrim smiled, knowingly.

"Not at all," he rejoined.

"They may appear so now, but by use, you know, they will collect dirt, and become rough, when they will seem as thick as the genuine bank-note paper."

"By Jove, I think you are right!" said Reynolds, after another examination of them.

"But don't you fancy it's rather risky, in their present state, to circulate them?"

"Maybe so," replied the detective.

"But I believe we might put a few thousand of them in circulation around Galena without detection."

Reynolds thought for a moment, then rejoined:

"It may be that you are right."

"I own it's a strong temptation, but I don't want to touch the matter," this cautiously.

"Let me tell you, sir, I'm doing a good, honest business, no matter what I have done heretofore."

"I have had nothing to do with affairs of this kind since I left Michigan."

"If I should be suspected, it would injure me more than I would gain."

"But there are plenty who'd be glad to get as good an article as this," he added.

"You are right, indeed," replied Broadbrim, smiling.

"How much of it have you?" asked Reynolds.

"About thirty thousand dollars' worth."

"That's a big amount."

"Yes, it is."

"Are you well acquainted in this part of the country?"

"Pretty much so—especially in this vicinity," answered Reynolds.

"Do you know parties by the name of Long, or Fox?"

"No, not by any of those names."

"If I could find them," pursued Broadbrim, "we could come to an understanding very soon."

"The only man I am acquainted with in this part who deals in matters of the kind lives three or four miles east of here."

"And he's a safe man?"

"Decidedly safe."

"And you think I could make a deal?"

"You had better go and see him, then judge for yourself."

"At any rate, I won't have anything to do with it."

This conversation convinced Broadbrim that, to some extent, he had been misinformed, and that Reynolds had no connection whatever with the gang, and was not the one described as having possession of Mr. Banks' watch.

Broadbrim, seeing that he could gain nothing from Reynolds, called to see the man he had alluded to.

But got no intelligence whatever of him.

After spending several days hunting about in quest of this person, he became satisfied that there was no possibility of locating him, and that the story of the watch being in the neighborhood of Galena was simply a ruse thrown out by the gang to mislead the authorities.

Broadbrim's next objective point was St. Louis.

He was informed that Browne and other members of the gang rarely ever went by rail to that city, and, fancying that he might possibly run across some one who knew the criminals and their habits, he determined to go to St. Louis by water.

This, as it subsequently proved, was about the best thing the Quaker could have done.

On board the steamboat, he was approached by a well-dressed young man, and addressed by a name which Broadbrim had assumed on his first arrival in Montrose.

At first he did not recollect having met the young fellow before.

"My name is Young," began his accoster.

"I met you at Jordan's, in Montrose, when I was recovering from a big sickness, and saw you occasionally in the barroom there."

Broadbrim finally recalled the fellow as a suspected member of the gang at the time of his search for Tom Browne.

"Seeing that we're acquaintances, Mr. Young," said Broadbrim, with great cordiality, "suppose we adjourn to the saloon, and take a social glass together?"

"I was going to suggest that myself," replied Young.

While they raised their glasses to their lips, Broadbrim said:

"What kind of speculation are you in nowadays?"

"Nothing much," was the reply.

"I've been at work of late a few miles from Galena."

"But, as there was little doing, I thought it as well to leave, and, as you see, I'm on my way now to St. Louis—that is, if I don't stop before I get there," added Young, laughing.

"I think I'm not mistaken in taking you for one of the right stripe?" ventured Broadbrim.

"Well, as to that——"

Then, suddenly interrupting himself:

"What do you call the right stripe?"

Broadbrim saw the fellow was cautious, and said:

"Pshaw! You know well enough what I mean?"

A half smile played around Young's lips, as he replied:

"Oh, if you mean a fellow who takes his grog now and then, I am of the right stripe—let's take another!"

Broadbrim found Young constantly on his guard, and returning with him to the hurricane-deck, after much conversation, in which he aimed to draw from him some account of the operations of the gang, he was obliged to defer his purpose till some other time.

Early the next morning, Broadbrim again met Young in the saloon; and, walking to the hurricane-deck, accosted him, with the remark:

"I heard your name mentioned as one of our sort, and, if you will pledge me the most profound secrecy, I would like to show you a little matter that is worth looking at."

"What is it?" questioned Young.

"Come to my stateroom, and I will show you."

"All right. We can pass a few minutes as pleasantly there as anywhere else!" responded Young.

When they were in Broadbrim's stateroom, the detective opened his satchel and produced the package of bank notes in just the condition in which he had shown them to Reynolds.

"Look at these blank bills on the —— National Bank, of Davenport, and see if you could tell them from the genuine."

Young, who was plainly an expert, took the bills and examined them.

"That's a splendid article!" he exclaimed, admiringly. "How much of it have you got?"

"Considerably more than what you see," replied Broadbrim.

"This is only a sample."

"I understand."

"But how much can you raise like it?"

"Two hundred thousand dollars, if I wish."

"I must, however, go to a certain city first, as none of it yet is filled or signed."

"What's the name of the city?"

"Well, knowing you are one of the boys, I have no objection telling you," said Broadbrim; "Cleveland, Ohio."

"But do you think the specimens really good?"

"Why, the imitation is so real that I would be deceived myself!" exclaimed Young, with an oath. "It's the best thing of the kind I ever saw in my life."

"I'm glad you think so."

"That, at least, is encouraging," with a well-simulated burst of enthusiasm.

"By Jove! I should like to join you in this game!" cried Young.

"It is a veritable gold mine, and no mistake about it."

"If I didn't think so, I wouldn't handle the stuff," said Broadbrim, with considerable emphasis.

"Yes, you can bet I would like to join!" proceeded Young.

"But the d—l of the thing is I am nearly broke."

"I shall make a raise very soon, however, and I know lots of the boys who would snap up such stuff as that, and give you a good price, too."

"You see, when I was about Galena, I took two horses, but sold 'em cheap, and I've been spreeing ever since."

"Are you entirely broke?" asked Broadbrim.

"If you are, I can lend you what you want, and you can repay me when you're fixed."

"I never let any of the boys want for money, when I've plenty myself," Broadbrim added.

"You're a blanked fine fellow."

"But do you know, I was a little afraid of you at first?" said Young.

"You were right. We must all be careful."

"I suppose the boys about Newtown have plenty of money now?"

"I understand they have made pretty good hauls of late."

This was said by the Quaker as a feeler.

"Yes, I reckon they have," replied Young; "mighty big hauls, too, at that."

"Do you know Old Devil's-hoof?"

"Very well."

"What do you think of him?" asked Broadbrim.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE TRACK AT LAST.

"What do I think of him?" repeated Young.

"Well, to tell you the truth, not much."

"Why, how is that?" said Broadbrim.

"Isn't he all right?"

"Well, you see," replied Young, "he's not honorable, in the first place, among his friends."

"He's not, eh? I thought he was true blue—a little eccentric, of course, but at bottom as good a man as any."

"Well, there's Jack, his son," continued Young, "he's as like the old man as two peas."

"I've been in a good many snaps with Jack."

"But the beggar always manages to get the money into his own hands, and holds on to it like the yellow jack to a nigger."

"I know of several good sights to raise when I can get the right kind of fellows to help me, but Old Devil's-hoof and his sons can't get a show in anything I put my hand to, you bet."

"If it wasn't that I've to go to a certain city soon, I'd like to go with you," said Broadbrim, insinuatingly.

"Nothing would suit me better than to have you, old fellow," replied Young.

"How many would be necessary to help you in the speculation?"

"Three or four would be enough."

"We could manage with that number," Young answered.

"The boys around Galena are cowards. They dare not do anything."

"There's a fellow named Miller, who keeps a grocery about two miles out of Galena."

"He's a great big bag of wind, and, though he's always boasting of what he can do, he daren't do anything, without some of the boys going on ahead."

"Then he's as leaky as an old tub, always telling everything."

"I daren't have anything to do with such people. It's too blamed dangerous."

"Then there is Long, but he won't do anything without Fox—so you see how a fellow's fixed between the lot of 'em."

"This is good—more than good," reflected Broadbrim.

"I'm on the track at last."

"You must have heard of Fox," went on Young; "but he goes by a dozen other names, just as it suits him."

"Oh, yes, I've heard of Fox, and Long, too," said Broadbrim.

"Can't you get Fox to help you by the time I get back to Galena with the stuff?"

"I'm afraid he has left for Missouri, and won't be back till summer."

"Then he'll be in Galena, and the boys won't do much until he returns."

"If Fox is away, can't we get Long to help?" said the detective.

OLD BROADBRIM WEEKLY.

"I don't see why we should all wait for Fox."

"Only that Fox has such a big influence with the boys, I wouldn't care," replied Young.

"Long told me he would stay at his father's, which is six miles from Galena, until Fox and his brother came back."

"This brother's name is John, and a fairly good chap he is."

"Besides, the other Long and I are not good friends. He was in queer street a while ago, and I lent him two hundred and fifty dollars, which he won't pay me now—and he has made ten times that amount since."

"The fact is, the reason I'm out of money now is that he won't do the fair thing by me."

"Does the father understand all his son's operations?" Broadbrim casually asked.

"Yes, and the mother, too."

"She is keener than all the rest of the family put together."

"And John Long and Fox travel together, I suppose?"

"Yes, for the last three or four years, and share equally in all they make."

"These two men seem to deal squarely enough with each other?" said Broadbrim.

"I should like Fox and Long to get some of my paper."

"If you could run across them, they would take lots of it," replied Young at once.

"Then I must run across them," said Broadbrim.

"There's nothing like having good men to deal with, you know."

"Some of the boys made a big raise lately from old Banks," Broadbrim added, feeling his way.

His purpose was to discover how much Young knew of the murder of the sawmill owner.

"I know all about that," responded Young, quickly.

"That was done by Fox, Long, Birch, and a man called Jackson."

"Jackson, eh?" ejaculated Broadbrim.

"I was told that Banks, in his description, spoke only of three men."

"That's right. Those were all he saw, but Jackson stood sentry outside, while Fox, Long, and Birch did the work in the house."

"But I'll tell you all about it," pursued Young.

"I had been up the river, and raised two horses, when I met Long, Birch, and Fox."

"Birch is also known by another name—Belcher."

"Well, I was up the river, as I tell you, and met them."

"I hadn't seen them for some time, and inquired what they were doing."

"They said they were going to raise thirty or forty thousand dollars."

"A first-class sight it was, they said, and a sure pop, at that."

"I proposed to go with them into the speculation, but they refused, saying that their company was made up, and that four were enough to push the operation through."

"As I saw it was no use forcing myself on them, I left, and went to Old Devil's-hoof's, to rest my horses for a few days before disposing of them."

"I subsequently was told old Banks was murdered, for he was the man they were going to rob, and that, instead of raising the thirty or forty thousand dollars, they got seven or eight hundred, a watch, and some other valuables."

"When I learned of their poor success, I was glad I didn't take a part in the spec, as there was not much in it, anyhow."

"Were you told where the boys met after robbing old Banks?" Broadbrim asked.

"They all went to Devil's Creek, where they stayed till news

reached them of Banks' death, when Jackson returned to old man Long's, and Fox, Birch, and John went back into Missouri."

"Well, I suppose they will know enough to take care of themselves, and not get caught?" said Broadbrim, emphasizing the word "caught."

"No danger of that."

"They're old hands at the business—know how to take care of themselves—and have plenty of friends all over."

Through this long colloquy, Young made his statements without seeming to have any suspicion; and Broadbrim determined to keep him talking, as his information, so far, was of value, and more yet might be obtained from him.

"Have you done any business since you disposed of the horses?" asked the Quaker, as he passed Young his cigarette-case.

"No. I tried a small one, but didn't succeed."

"It was this way—I was lounging in a store in a small town some twenty miles from Galena, and, seeing the owner changing some money, noticed a small quantity of gold in his desk, as well as a big roll of bank notes."

"I accordingly watched the store, and, while he was at supper, entered by the back door."

"I got as far as the desk, when, hearing him on the front steps, I ran out as he was coming in, and escaped unnoticed."

"After watching the store for several days, I got in again, and was in the very act of opening the desk, when the merchant entered at the front door."

"This was just at dusk."

"I left very suddenly, as you may suppose, with the fellow at my heels, crying 'Stop thief! Stop thief!' at the top of his lungs."

"I ran through the alley toward the river, with all possible expedition."

"Near the bank of the river was a house kept by some girls, with whom I was acquainted."

"When I burst into the house, the storekeeper was but a few steps in the rear."

"I cried to the girls to hide me."

"'Here,' said one of them, 'squat in the corner of the room,' and she threw some bedclothes over me."

"Where's the thief?" cried the merchant, entering the next instant, almost winded by his efforts to overtake me."

"Who do you mean?" asked the girl, innocently.

"Did not a man just come in here?" gasped the storekeeper.

"Yes; but he passed out at the back door. If you run quick, you'll catch him. Don't delay an instant."

"You can bet I won't!"

"And away he went, wheezing and snuffing like a locomotive, and I saw no more of him."

"I tell you, there is nothing like a woman's ready wit to keep a man out of a scrape."

"I stayed with the girls till about nine o'clock, and then left that part for old man Long's."

"How," Broadbrim asked, "did the boys first learn that old Banks had money, and by what means they could get it?"

Broadbrim might have queered himself here, had Young been on his guard.

But he was not, so answered without the slightest suspicion:

"The man who engineered the affair lives in the neighborhood of the Banks family, and was well acquainted with them."

"He had worked at one time for old Banks, and knew all about the ins and outs of the house."

"About two weeks before the boys concluded to loot the place, he went to Banks' house, spent the afternoon, and took supper with the family, under pretense of a friendly visit, but for the real purpose of ascertaining the situation of the family at the

time, to enable the boys to decide upon the most practicable mode of attack.

"He discovered that there were five men in the house, that they all slept in the upper rooms, and were well supplied with firearms, and that Banks kept his money in a safe."

"Did you learn the name of that fellow?" questioned Broadbrim, carelessly.

"No."

"In relating the circumstances, the boys did not mention his name, and, of course, I didn't ask."

Broadbrim, seeing nothing further was to be gained in this direction, turned the subject.

"By the way, Young," said he, "do you think they have gone so far into Missouri that they will not return by the time I get back with the stuff?" (Counterfeit bank notes.)

"I really want to take some part in your own scheme, before I start in with the paper—that is, to dispose of it, you understand?"

"I suppose they will go to St. Louis, and possibly to St. Jo, before they return?"

"I'm almost certain they'll not be in this part of the country before June or July."

"That is a long way to look forward to," said Broadbrim, reflectively.

"It is—more especially to a man who is impatient as to results."

"Very well, then, as soon as I get back with the 'queer,' and supply you and your friends, if there is no better 'spec' on hand, I want to take an extensive trip through the country."

"I suppose you are acquainted with most of the boys, and can tell me where to go, and who to call on?"

"Yes, I know all of them, or the greater number of them—South and West, as well as those about Galena, Rock Island, and the other places."

"I can give you all the names you want."

"Tell me which way you want to travel, and I will give you a few names as a starter to call on, and those I introduce you to can give you all the names you will want in traveling from point to point."

"I intend to journey through Missouri—taking in St. Louis, of course, as a central point."

"Very well, then. If you leave the Mississippi and travel West, call on Matt Harris, at Harris' Grove, on the Sharridón River, near the line between Missouri and Iowa, about a hundred miles west of the Mississippi River."

"He keeps a station there, and knows all the boys in the upper part of Missouri."

"Fox always puts up with him when he's in that part of the country."

"In St. Louis, find Thomas Parton, who keeps a livery stable near the corner of Third and Plume streets."

"A good many of our fellows stop with him, and he buys horses of them."

"He's about as good a man as you can meet. I know him well."

"But I'll write you out a list, and that will do the whole business much better than my talking."

CHAPTER X.

A CAUTIOUS CROOK.

"No, no; there's no need of you making any list," said Broadbrim.

"Pray, go on; I like to hear you talk, Young."

Whether Young was flattered or not by this compliment, did not appear. He simply replied:

"Do you think your memory good enough to recall the names?"

"Yes, I think so," Broadbrim answered.

"Where did I leave off, now?" asked Young, as if this object was to put the detective's memory to the test.

"You left off at Tom Parton's, Plume and Third streets, St. Louis, livery stable keeper."

"Right. But don't lose sight of Matt Harris, Harris' Grove, on the Sharridón River."

"Even if you should miss Parton, make it a point to call on Matt, for it will be worth your while."

"Then on the road leading to B—, you will find a man named Glen. He is one of the right stripe, too."

"Doesn't Birch's family live somewhere in that direction?" questioned Broadbrim.

"Not at all."

"His people live nine miles southwest of Marshall, Illinois."

"He keeps a rendezvous, and knows all the boys in that vicinity."

Then Young went on to give the names of others, not necessary here to specify.

Then he proceeded:

"You can call on any of those men."

"They are all as true as steel, and, if you say you come from Billy Young, they will give you all the help you need."

"I'll not forget, my boy, to mention your name in each case—for, if it does nothing else, it will help me to dispose of the 'stuff' when it's ready." was Broadbrim's reply.

"To be sure it will."

And thus ended the conversation.

The reader will perceive that it was of considerable importance to Broadbrim's undertaking—as it contained an explicit statement of the steps taken by the assassins previous to their murder of Banks.

It also proved that more than Fox, Birch, and Long were engaged in that cowardly crime; it placed the detective also on the track of a new and, perhaps, greater scoundrel—who had involved himself as an accessory—than either of those actually engaged in the fiendish crime—the villain who, under the guise of friendship, had obtained the necessary information for them, and who was plotting his villainy even when sharing the hospitality and kindness of the unfortunate Banks beneath the shelter of his own roof!

When the steamer had arrived at Rock Island, it stopped till the next day before it resumed its trip to St. Louis.

This gave Broadbrim a chance to communicate with one of the gentlemen with whom he held the consultation before he had expressed his intention of getting initiated as a member of the gang.

When he found this gentleman, and narrated the particulars of the part acted by the man who had visited the house of Mr. Banks, under the garb of friendship, he recognized in the description a man named Baxter, who had been for several years, and was at the time of the murder, a neighbor of Banks.

But this man, soon after the event, had removed to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, wholly unsuspected.

As the reader will observe, the present position of the murderers, so far as had been discovered, was as follows:

Three of the principals, according to the account of Young, were traveling as members of the gang.

Long, the younger of the brothers, supposed to have taken a part in the bloody deed, was at his father's, east of Galena; Baxter was in Milwaukee; Old Devil's-hoof, as he was called, was on Devil's Creek, Lee County, as was his son—these were accessories

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—while Young was a passenger on the steamboat, the man who had given the information.

Some of these could be arrested with little delay, but it was determined that they should remain unmolested until the three principals were taken.

This had to be accomplished by following out the trail marked by Young, which course was considered the best to pursue under the circumstances.

Broadbrim, having arranged everything to his satisfaction in Rock Island, and having been promised a large supply of the "paper" at any time by Pinkerton, to whom he had "wired," he once more returned to the boat, which pursued next morning its downward trip to St. Louis.

The Quaker detective was met in the saloon, as usual, by Young, and, by resuming the interview, he obtained additional information relative to the extensive organization and operations of the gang.

Young informed him that he was a native of Nebraska, and had been a member of the gang for six years.

He also asserted that a notorious crook, whose name he could not then recall, who was an associate of Birch in many of his operations, was at that time on the Sherridon River, in the neighborhood of Harris' Grove.

Lower down the river, Young left the boat, whence he proceeded to Devil's Creek, where he shortly afterward was arrested.

When Broadbrim had got to St. Louis, he discovered that, notwithstanding the supposed secrecy with which the plot was progressing, there was a leak somewhere among the authorities, and that some inkling of the project had been seized upon by the editor of a Quincy weekly.

In the last number of this paper an article had appeared containing enough to put the murderers on their guard.

As this article had been copied into the St. Louis papers, the Quaker set about having it contradicted.

In this he was aided by an old New York journalist, whom he met, and who had friends among the prominent St. Louis papers.

While waiting in St. Louis, Mr. Pinkerton expressed the "paper" (bank bills) alluded to previously.

Broadbrim had been expecting this consignment, and was now prepared to make the calls he had meditated.

His first call was on Tom Parton, at Plume and Third streets.

Before going, he found out from the police that Parton's character, so far as was known, was good.

He met the livery stable keeper on Plume street, and introduced himself as a Mr. White.

"I have been referred to you, Mr. Parton," began Broadbrim, boldly, "as a gentleman with whom it would be beneficial to have a little private conversation."

Parton looked at him sharply for a few moments, then replied:

"Who referred you to me?"

"Billy Young."

"I don't know any such person," said Parton, shortly.

"Indeed?"

"No, sir, I do not."

This was emphatic enough.

But Broadbrim, nothing daunted, pursued his inquiries:

"Do you know Thomas Browne, of Newtown?"

"No."

"Do you know any one by the name of Long, or Birch?"

"No, I do not."

"Then, you're probably not the person I was referred to by my friend Young."

"Where do you hail from?" asked Parton, bluntly.

"No place in particular. Wherever business calls me," replied Broadbrim, carelessly.

By this time he had concluded that to succeed with the livery stable man he had to play the indifferent as much as possible.

Parton watched the expression of Broadbrim's face closely, and finally said.

"I guess I understand your business now."

"In that case, the public street is no place for a chat," said Broadbrim at once.

"I have no private room, however."

"Won't your office do?"

"No."

"Is there no place," went on the Quaker, "to which we could adjourn for a short time, so that we can transact business on the quiet?"

"I don't know that there is," said Parton.

"You see, the police are watching every move a fellow makes nowadays, and, if they saw us together, there might be trouble."

"Besides, I don't care to go into any of those saloons or hotels, as I think it would only aggravate the trouble."

"Well, what if I hire a rig at your place, and drive into the country?" suggested Broadbrim.

"Not on your life!" cried Parton. "Not on your life! That would only make matters worse, and give the police cause to suspect me."

"You may do so at some other livery stable, though," added he.

"All right. I'll get a horse and carriage at the Russell House, and then there will be no trouble."

"Good!" from Parton. "I will meet you at the Russell House in about an hour."

Parton was as good as his word.

He met Broadbrim punctually at the appointed time.

They had got into the country before Broadbrim again introduced the subject.

"You may think, Mr. Parton," he began, "that I am rather free for a stranger."

"But, when I have satisfactory references, I'm not backward in making my business known."

"I've no fear that you will betray me."

"H'm! I'm not apt to betray confidence," was Parton's dry reply.

"Well, then, I will show you a little specimen of work which I think will meet your approval."

"What do you think of this article?"

The Quaker produced specimens of "paper" which had been sent on to him by William Pinkerton.

After examining the bills for some time, Parton replied.

"It's first-class."

"How much have you like it?"

"Not much; but I will soon have any quantity."

"When I get back to St. Louis, I would like to leave about twenty thousand dollars' worth in the city."

"Billy tells me you are acquainted with all the boys in this vicinity, and would not hesitate to assist me."

"I think I can help you, if you want me to," said Parton, cautiously.

"When I first met you," he added, "I thought best to be careful."

"It is squally times about here at present, Mr. White."

"The detectives are watching for some boys from Cleveland, but they won't find them, or I'm much mistaken."

"Turner is one of them."

"Is Turner in this city?" asked Broadbrim, as though he knew the man.

"Yes, but he is lying low at present and can't be seen."

"Are the boys doing anything in this section of the country now?"

"Not a great deal."

"I am well acquainted with the men whose names you gave me, but I must confess I was afraid of you at first—hence my denials to your questions."

"I thought that Billy wouldn't lie to me," averred Broadbrim, casually.

"No, Billy is true blue."

"You couldn't have mentioned a man in whom I would put more faith."

"You can rely on what Young says."

"He said you were able to accomplish more than any one in this section," Broadbrim interjected.

What Broadbrim said plainly pleased Parton, for he at once returned:

"These are the best imitations of the genuine bills I ever saw."

"In fact, none but the best judges could detect them."

"I fancy you're not overestimating the value when you say that," replied Broadbrim.

"Indeed, it costs a big pile to engrave as good a plate as this, and I believe I can realize a hundred per cent. on the capital invested at that."

"I have no doubt but you will do well with it," said the livery-stable keeper, as he glanced once more at the bills.

"But there's nothing doing of the kind now in St. Louis."

"I have a little spurious gold, but have been dealing mostly in horses."

"I buy them very cheap of the boys, then fix 'em up to suit myself, and take them in several directions to sell."

"Don't you occasionally have an owner turn up who claims your animal as his?"

The livery-stable keeper laughed at this.

"Not often," he replied.

"I've had as many as thirty horses at one time, and never had one claimed."

"I usually keep them out of sight till I get 'em fixed up for market."

"Changing their appearance as much as possible, I run them down to some Southern port."

"Once I nearly got into serious trouble, though," he pursued.

"I bought a horse of one of the boys, who had 'raised' him back in the country."

"Before I had time to fix and dispose of him, the man who had stolen him was taken dangerously ill; his attending physician pronounced the case incurable, and I was fearful that he would get frightened and confess everything, for the fellow, you see, had a religious streak in him."

"In the meantime there was such a close search for the horse that I was compelled to keep him secreted."

"I sheared and docked him, so as to change his looks as much as possible."

"Finally the man died clear grit without squealing on anybody."

"Watching my chance, I soon after got the horse down the river, sold him, and so the matter ended, with nobody the wiser."

"Still I ran a big risk at that," said Parton.

"Indeed you did," agreed Broadbrim.

"But as the saying is—the devil's children have the devil's luck."

"Not very complimentary, but true," Parton grinned.

"Are you dealing in horses now, or don't the boys keep you well supplied?" Broadbrim questioned.

"H'm, they might keep me much better supplied if they would," replied Parton. "I did get two horses a few days ago."

"One of the Longs, Fox and Birch came here with three bang-up animals a few days since, and left two of them with me."

"They're capital men," said Broadbrim, with a note of admiration in his voice—"capital men."

He was now on the point, as he thought, of obtaining what he had been aching for—the location of the three rascals in question.

"Well," continued Parton, "as I had no suitable place to keep them, I took them out a few miles and put them in pasture."

"I fancy that ought to be a good plan."

"It is—and the only plan one can adopt under the circumstances," replied Parton.

CHAPTER XI.

OLD CRAFTY.

Old Broadbrim, without arousing suspicion, said presently:

"By the way, Young has a very high opinion of Fox and Birch."

"He says they're as game as pebbles."

"That's what they are," replied the livery-stable keeper. "Have you never met them?"

"No; I would like to get acquainted with them."

"Don't you think they will want to get some of the 'paper'?"

"I'd be glad to supply them with any quantity on my return."

"I suppose they have always plenty of money about them?"

"Well, they appeared to have, as far as I could see."

"As to Birch. I never met him until he came here the other day with Fox and Long."

"Fox I've been acquainted with many years, and I believe I know as much about his business as any man in the county."

"He's a very careful fellow, and has always been very successful."

"He doesn't spend much of what he makes, you may stake your life on that."

"What does he do with it—invest it?" Broadbrim asked.

"He told me he had about ten thousand dollars secreted somewhere in Iowa—in four separate bottles, corked and sealed, airtight."

"Fancy that!"

"Why, he's the most energetic fellow I ever saw."

"He doesn't mind lying out three and four nights in succession, to accomplish his designs."

"Storms, cold or heat, hunger or fatigue, are all the same to him."

"When once he resolves on a thing, he never fails to accomplish it."

By further questioning Broadbrim elicited that Parton was not acquainted with Long more than eighteen months, and that the two conjointly "worked" the upper part of Missouri, when engaged in horse stealing, and that Fox had a race horse valued at four thousand dollars.

"It must be a pretty good horse to be worth that," casually said Broadbrim.

"The finest I ever saw in my life."

"Did I understand you to say the boys are in St. Louis?" Broadbrim questioned, as they rode back to the city.

"No, not now."

"Where are they?"

"I couldn't exactly tell you."

"They left St. Louis in a hurry, several days ago."

"I was out of town, and happened to come across a newspaper, and read in it an article containing certain disclosures, im-

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plicating Fox, Long and Birch in several robberies which had been committed, also expressing the opinion that they were concerned in the Banks murder.

"I carried the paper home, and showed it to the boys."

"They left St. Louis and crossed to Illinois the same day."

"Just at night Fox returned after his race horse, and said they were all going East."

"Do you think they had anything to do with the murder of Banks?"

"They didn't say."

"Personally I don't know anything about that affair."

Broadbrim concluded it would be little use putting any further questions with regard to the Banks murder, so he said:

"How much of my paper shall I reserve for you when I return from Cleveland?"

"If it's all as good as the sample, I shall want a considerable amount."

"Don't you want some of this gold?" Parton added, handing Broadbrim a five-dollar gold coin, which was counterfeit.

The Quaker examined the spurious money critically.

"I think not at present," he said.

"I wouldn't dare pass it while I have all those bank bills in my possession."

"If I should be arrested for passing the gold, and the bills found on me, it would be no easy matter to get out of the scrape."

"I fancy I had better not meddle with it now."

After a pleasant ride back to the city, Broadbrim left Parton, and communicated the intelligence he had received from him to the chief of police, who was to maintain the whole affair in the strictest secrecy.

As it was no use staying longer in St. Louis, under the circumstances, Broadbrim, acting on Billy Young's information, set out for Marshall, Illinois, to hunt up Old Birch, the father of one of the murderers of Banks.

On arriving at Marshall, he disclosed the object of his quest to the sheriff of Clark county, a gentleman named Bennett, from whom he learned that the information he had received from Young was correct—in as far as old man Birch, himself, was concerned.

"In this neighborhood," said Bennett, "Birch is known by the name of Old Crafty."

"And I suppose deserves the appellation?" said Broadbrim.

"Indeed, yes—a craftier old rogue never lived."

"We have set many traps for him, but he has succeeded up to this in outwitting us all."

"H'm, that's how the land lies, eh?

"Do you know his son?"

"Edward? Certainly! And a pretty hard case he is."

"But he dare not show himself hereabouts for his life."

"Why?"

"He is wanted, and badly, too."

"Has he been up to any devilment?"

"Any number of robberies—some six or seven, at least—all of which have occurred in Clark County."

"Do you know what I think?" said Broadbrim, after a pause.

"I think Mr. Edward is in Clark County now."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"Why do you think so?"

"From certain information I received while at St. Louis," Broadbrim answered.

"It wouldn't surprise me but he's concealed, while we are talking now, at his father's house."

"It may be you are right," reflectively from Bennett.

"But, if hidden there, the appearance of a stranger might excite suspicion, and defeat his being discovered and arrested."

"Old Crafty is one of the shrewdest, most cautious men in this State."

"He is said to have been well educated, yet feigns unusual ignorance, and will never sign his name in any business transaction."

"He pretends he can't write, eh?"

"That's about the size of it."

"I don't think it would be advisable for you to go there."

The sheriff's views were probably right.

Nevertheless, Broadbrim resolved to call on Old Crafty, believing he could succeed in passing himself off as one of the gang, with him, as well as with the others.

Old Crafty, according to Bennett, lived about nine miles from Marshall.

The road to his dwelling was through an exceedingly dense forest, and by a blind path, to follow which, to a stranger, was nearly impracticable.

"It would be next to impossible for you to find the way there alone," said Bennett, "so I will accompany you a sufficient distance on the way to enable you to locate the house."

Thanking the sheriff for his kindly offer, Broadbrim set out on horseback for Old Crafty's, Bennett guiding him till they had got within half a mile of that worthy's house.

"It's no use of my going any farther with you," said he.

"You can find the way easily now, and I will await your return in this thicket; that is, if you are not too long."

Broadbrim intimated that that would suit him very well, and following Bennett's directions he emerged from the thick forest and entered a large and partially cultivated inclosure, near the center of which stood a miserable log cabin, in a very dilapidated condition, almost crumbling to the ground.

Leaving his mount at the edge of the timber he approached the house on foot.

The door was standing open, and within it, near the foot of a big, old-fashioned, four-posted bed, sat a very old man.

A woman nigh his own age, and a girl of fifteen or sixteen were in the act of adjusting some portions of the old man's dress as the detective entered the room.

Some bustle ensued on Broadbrim's abrupt entrance.

But there was no other surprise shown, and the girl placed a stool for the detective to sit on, and brought a glass of milk for him to drink.

After some incidental conversation, Old Crafty, for it was Birch himself upon whom the Quaker had intruded, inquired:

"Do you live in this part of the country, stranger?"

"No, sir; I do not."

Broadbrim had been posted as to the old man's peculiarities by Bennett.

"Where do you hail from, if I may ask?"

"No particular place. I spend my time traveling and speculating."

"Do you want to see me?" came the next question from the crafty old fellow, whose keen eyes took his visitor in at once.

"Some of your old acquaintances wished me to give you a call, should I pass through your neighborhood; and, my business leading me to this section, I have sought you out."

"Humph!" ejaculated the old man.

"Who do you mean by my 'old acquaintances'?"

"Billy Young, for one and—"

"How large a man is Billy Young?" quickly from Birch.

Here Broadbrim described Young as though he were in front of him.

This seemed to partially satisfy the old chap.

"Are you acquainted with old John Long?" was his next query.

"Only by description," replied Broadbrim.

"I never saw him, but I know the boys—his sons—though."

"You do, eh?

"H'm! I was raised with their father in North Carolina. I have known him ever since he was a boy."

"He's a right clever old chap, and has two bang-up sons."

"Yes; I guess there are no flies on either of them," replied Broadbrim.

"They know how to take care of themselves, anyway."

"You are right; I guess they do."

"How did you travel—afoot?"

"Not on your life, Mr. Birch," returned Broadbrim.

"I know a thing worth two of that."

"No; I came a-horseback."

"I left the beast at the edge of the woods, and I think I had better step out and look to him."

Saying which, Broadbrim winked to the old man, who readily followed him out of the cabin.

When they were out of hearing, Old Crafty said:

"Well, what is it, stranger?"

"The boys tell me you are one of ourselves, so I suppose I can proceed to disclose my business without further hesitation."

"Reckon if you tell me it'll go no further," was the old dodger's reply.

"Speak out!"

"What is it?"

"I felt sure that you were one of us," said Broadbrim, "and I left the main road because I promised the boys I would see you on my way down, and give you a little accommodation in my line."

"Look at these blank notes"—producing some of the bills which Pinkerton had sent him.

"They are a small sample of my work."

"I have a large amount to fill up and sign."

"I am now on my way to Cleveland after it, and on my return I shall dispose of considerable of the stuff. I suppose you can help me some?"

"Yes, I can that."

"A good many of the boys stop with me, and I know them that'll buy it."

"If you ain't too exactin' in the price I can get you purchasers."

"That's a fair deal; I wouldn't ask anything fairer," said Broadbrim.

"Do you think you could get a lot of horses with such paper?" he added, holding the bills up so that the light fell on them.

"Do you think you could and have them delivered at St. Louis?"

"Yes," replied Old Crafty; "and plenty of money, too."

"Have you any influential friends in this section who understand this business and are acquainted with the boys?"

"I reckon so," replied the old man.

"There is a Mr. Bloodgood at Marshall, and the clerk of the court."

"They both understand such matters, and are tiptop men to deal with."

"I think they would like to trade with you, and I reckon they're not green at the business."

The clerk of the court, eh?

This was coming it strong.

But there was no doubt truth in Old Crafty's suggestion about the clerk and Mr. Bloodgood.

"Are you suspected of being connected with the boys?" was the detective's next question.

"I reckon not."

"The clerk is a good friend of mine and always tells me what is going on."

"If the sheriff should get a writ against me the clerk would give me the tip soon enough to get me out of the way."

"You see, there's where I am strong," Crafty added with a chuckle.

"Are you acquainted east of us so you can direct me where to stop along the road?"

"I've never traveled this way before, and of course don't know much about the boys in this section."

"Let me see," said Birch, "I'll try to give you a list of those you can call on."

"First there are the Nugents, then old John Long's nephews."

"They live in Owen County, Indiana, about fifty miles east of here."

"They're all good boys, but Bill Long's the smartest of the lot."

"He sticks to his friends, and is grit to the backbone."

"I will tell you what Bill did last year," went on the old man.

"A chap named Bundy was in jail at Louisville, and would have gone to State prison if no one had helped him."

"The boys were all afraid, but Bill, to go to his assistance."

"Bill swore he wouldn't see a friend suffer while he could help him."

"After some persuasion he got Billy Young to go with him to Louisville."

"Upon Bundy's trial they swore him off clear."

"If Bill had been timid like the other boys Bundy would now be serving a term in State prison; so you see he is clear grit, and a right smart fellow into the bargain."

"I would like a few men like him for partners," said Broadbrim, "if I could only get them."

"But where is John Long, old John's son? I haven't seen him for some time; probably he's in Missouri."

"Maybe, but I haven't seen him myself in months."

"Nor heard from him even?"

"No; are you much acquainted in Missouri?"

"Yes, especially along the river."

"Do you know a man by the name of Edward Birch?" asked the old chap, his eyes glowing like coals.

"Edward T. Birch; he's my son; one of the smartest fellows of the lot; do you know him?"

"I've heard the boys mention his name, but I've never seen him," Broadbrim truthfully answered.

"If you did you'd like to travel with him," exclaimed the old man, proudly.

"From what you say I'm sure I would," replied Broadbrim, taking his cue from Crafty.

"Has he been in the biz long?"

"He has traveled nine years, got plenty of money, and never gets caught, which is the best of it."

"He has not been home in six years."

"He wrote me from St. Louis a short while ago that he would be here before this time, but he has not come."

"How do you account for that?"

"Guess he is making money. He and one of my other sons, Ted, left the old home together."

"Teddy, poor fellow, they hung him in Florida."

"They just strung him up without judge or jury, strung him up like a dog."

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"But it will take 'em all their time to catch Ned; he's one too many for 'em."

By this Broadbrim and Old Crafty had returned to the house, where they found another son, Nick Birch, who had just returned from the forest with his rifle.

Nick was the youngest son of Old Crafty, and as his father proudly remarked to the detective, looked very much like Edward.

Then Birch described the appearance of his favorite son at length, dwelling minutely upon his qualities and peculiarities.

He was evidently very proud of this son of his.

He very earnestly desired Broadbrim to seize the first chance he might have to cultivate Ned's acquaintance and associate with him.

"There's not a luckier lad in the States," he ended, "and he's true grit to his toenails."

Broadbrim readily promised to hunt him up, and to become as intimate with him as possible; and the reader may well believe that he meant it, for this of course was his principal object in paying Old Crafty a visit.

The old woman and her daughter, being informed that Broadbrim was one of the boys, became talkative.

They were at least equal in wickedness to any members of the gang of the other sex, and, if anything, appeared by contrast, much worse.

They seemed thoroughly debased.

The old woman indulged in the most bitter denunciation of a certain neighbor.

She swore some terrible vengeance against him—that she would shoot him, chop him into mincemeat, etc., and all because this neighbor, she said, had tried to have her son prosecuted for stealing a miserable little pony, not worth fifty dollars; and she appeared also to believe that the man was in some way connected with having Teddy hung in Florida.

Broadbrim was earnestly solicited by the family, who appeared to have taken a great fancy to him, to remain with them a few days to recruit himself and horse.

But, satisfied that Edward Birch was not concealed in the neighborhood of his father's house, and that there was no prospect of discovering track of the murderers from old Birch, he declined.

Giving his name as Tom Browne, the elusive worthy whom he had lost track of, and promising to call on his return from Cleveland and spend more time with them, he left, apparently having satisfied Old Crafty and his people that he was one of the boys and a worthy associate of Edward.

CHAPTER XII.

A HORSE DEAL.

Old Broadbrim now went back to where he had left the sheriff of Clark County.

But Bennett, supposing that he would stay overnight with the Birches, had returned home, leaving the Quaker to make the best of his way to Marshall, unassisted and alone.

The instincts of his horse served Broadbrim in great style, however.

It carried him safely through the dense forest, and he reached Marshall about midnight.

The following morning he called on Bennett, and disclosed, as far as prudence dictated, the facts elicited from his conversation with old Birch, also mentioning the character which the old man had given of Bloodgood and the clerk of the court.

"That accounts for several miscarriages of justice which have occurred here of late," observed Bennett.

"For some cause, heretofore unknown, the authorities have not been able to secure a conviction in many cases. But they were far from suspecting anything wrong with the officers of the court," Bennett declared.

Bennett promised to watch closely the movements of Old Crafty and his family, and to advise Broadbrim of any appearance of the suspected ones; also to keep an eye on Bloodgood and the clerk of the court.

The next place the detective went to was Terre Haute, Indiana.

He got word that some of the men he was looking for might be there.

He was directed to call on the sheriff of Vigo County—a Mr. Stickney by name.

This official informed him that a man calling himself Fox

had recently been arrested and committed to jail on a charge of horse-stealing.

From Mr. Stickney's description, Broadbrim had no doubt but the man was the same Fox suspected of participating in the murder of Mr. Banks.

"Where is the jail?" Broadbrim asked.

"At Bowling Green, in Clay County."

"If you wish, I will go with you."

"It may be putting you to too much trouble," said Broadbrim.

"What is the distance?"

"About twenty-five miles."

"No—no, it will put me to no trouble," the sheriff averred.

"I'll get a rig at once and we'll drive out there."

"It will be an outing for me, if nothing else," added he.

As the roads proved to be extremely bad after a severe stress of weather, they did not reach Bowling Green till next morning, though they might have taken another and better way of getting there.

However, it was very late at night when they started, and they had a breakdown on the way, hence the delay.

On their arrival at Bowling Green they learned that Fox had been arrested on suspicion of horse-stealing, and that another of the gang was also under arrest on a similar charge.

Four horses had been taken from them and detained as stolen.

The owner of one of the horses had appeared and proved his property.

Fox was taken before a magistrate and held to bail in the sum of one thousand dollars, in default of which he was committed to jail.

His companion, whose name was Phillips, was likewise held in the sum of five hundred dollars.

His father giving bonds to that amount, Phillips was released.

Fox remained in custody for eight days, when his father came and bailed him in the sum required, upon which he also was released, the three horses being detained, though there was no evidence of their being stolen.

When Fox was released he held a brief colloquy with his father in the main street, then left the town.

The elder Fox, having settled his son's hotel bill and other little matters, returned to his home, sixty-five miles east of Indianapolis, Wayne County, Indiana.

As Fox had left town before his father, and in a different direction all present track of him was wholly lost.

Broadbrim could discover nothing at Bowling Green of the whereabouts of Birch and Long, and he thought for a moment that they had not come with the man who had been so recently bailed.

One of the horses taken from Fox and detained, Broadbrim readily recognized, from Parton's description, as the race horse stolen in Missouri.

All track of the murderers of Mr. Banks had now disappeared.

There was none of Long and Birch since they left St. Louis, except an occasional hint that was altogether untrustworthy, and none of Fox since he left his father in Bowling Green five days ago.

The detective soon felt confident, however, that Birch and Long were in the neighborhood when Fox was arrested, but had left after in a hurry.

Being unable to determine what course to pursue now, Broadbrim resolved to take counsel with some of the authorities of the place, to whom he disclosed the object of his quest.

These officials willingly pledged themselves to render the detective every assistance in their power.

He learned from the chief of police that Phillips, who was arrested with Fox, lived in Owen County, but a few miles distant, and in a sparsely settled part of the country.

Phillips lived in the house of the Long boys—that branch of the family to whom Old Crafty had so emphatically alluded.

It was likewise in this house that Fox had been arrested.

Upon receiving this intelligence Broadbrim resolved to visit the settlement, and by stratagem get track of the murderers.

When he proposed this, the chief of police said that such efforts had already been made, but without success, and that such an attempt would be dangerous in the extreme, as in that part of the country the gang was very strong.

"Besides," pursued the chief, "should they discover your plot, your death would be certain."

Broadbrim only smiled at this, and replied that he had determined to make the attempt regardless of consequences.

Then he suggested that it might be well, perhaps, that the stolen horses taken from Fox be placed in his charge temporarily, as he might find them of assistance in carrying out his plans.

"A very good idea, indeed," agreed the chief.

"It shall be done as you wish."

After this Broadbrim was soon on his way to where Phillips was stopping.

We must not omit to state that Phillips was connected by marriage with the Longs, he having married a Long girl.

When the detective got near his destination, he inquired for Phillips.

The man whom he made the inquiry of replied:

"He lives somewhat off from the road.

"But guess he's not at home, and you won't see him," declared his informant, scrutinizing him keenly.

"If his wife's at home, it will answer my purpose just as well," replied the Quaker, asking for the direction.

"She lives at old Mother Long's.

"Keep on till you get to a small bridge crossing a ravine.

"Then turn into the woods to your right.

"You will find a by-path which, if you follow, will lead you in sight of the house.

"Are you acquainted with Phillips?" asked the man, with a strain of suspicion in his eyes.

"A friend of his, that's all," replied Broadbrim, carelessly.

Following the direction of his informant, through a forest thick with tangled underbrush and nearly impenetrable, Broadbrim presently emerged from a dense thicket and found himself within but a few rods distant of a miserable and dilapidated frame house, with an open porch, or stoop, in front.

He dismounted at the edge of the timber, hitched up his horse—one he had hired in Bowling Green for the occasion—and walked to the house.

He found Mother Long—a meager specimen of womanhood—poorly clad and besmeared with dirt, and the wife of Phillips, a woman twenty years of age, of rather delicate features, but whose whole appearance was very little, if any, superior to that of her mother.

After seating himself on a rickety chair, Broadbrim inquired for Mr. Phillips, and was told he was not at home.

"Is he expected soon? I would like to see him," said he.

After watching the detective sharply for a moment, as if to read the object of his mission, Mrs. Phillips inquired:

"Does Phillips owe you anything?"

"No."

"Do you live about here?"

"No; I live three hundred miles distant," was Broadbrim's reply.

"Are you acquainted with Phillips?"

"No; I have never seen him, but I am well known to some of his friends, and as I was passing through the country so near him, I thought I would call."

"Do you know Fox?" asked the old woman, chiming in.

"Yes, very well, indeed. He's an intimate friend of mine," responded the detective, unblushingly.

"Is he, indeed? Why Fox was here only a few days ago," mumbled the old woman.

"Then I'm sorry I didn't meet him—I've been looking for him for a month.

"How unfortunate!"

And Broadbrim pretended to be annoyed that he had come too late and missed his "friend."

"Do you want to see Phillips right bad?" asked the younger woman, regarding Broadbrim now with more confidence.

"Yes, I do."

"Well, I guess I can holler him up, if that's all."

Thus speaking, Mrs. Phillips left the house, and commenced to yell at the top of her voice.

Soon an answering shout was heard, and Phillips, emerging from the timber, entered the house.

He was a short-built man with black hair and mustache, and appeared to be about thirty years of age.

He seemed somewhat startled and displeased at the sight of the Quaker, however.

But a few words of assurance from the old woman and his wife that Broadbrim was one of the boys, his good nature in a measure returned, although his speech was rather in the way of complaint of the ill-treatment to which he had been recently subjected, and Broadbrim judged that he was by no means as well

satisfied that the detective was one of the gang as his family were.

"I am," said he, "a hardworking man, and never did a dishonest act in my life, but the people about Bowling Green are trying to ruin me.

"A man came here a few days since and sold me a horse.

"Soon after the owner came, and said it was stolen.

"I knew nothing about it—simply taking the man at his word—and paying the full value of the animal.

"But because he was found in my possession they took me to Bowling Green, and put me in jail.

"That's nice treatment, ain't it?

"All the folks of Bowling Green are dead set against me, and I reckon I shall now lose all I paid for the horse, as I don't know the man I bought it of."

As Phillips got thus far in a description of his woes, Broadbrim intimated that he had something for his private ear and that he would like to see him alone for a few moments.

Saying which, he got up from his chair, and was followed by Phillips from the house.

When they had got some distance out of earshot, Broadbrim accosted the man in a most familiar manner, and at the same time with a somewhat determined air.

"Look here, Phillips," said the Quaker, "it's all nonsense to talk this kind of stuff to me.

"It's well enough for the people about here, but I understand such matters, and will tell you my business at once.

"I came to see if these horses, which were taken from Fox, can be got and carried away from Bowling Green.

"Fox and I are old friends.

"I am traveling across the country from St. Louis to Cleveland, and when I arrived at Terre Haute I heard that Fox had got into a bad scrape at Bowling Green, so I came up to see about it.

"I find Fox has given bail and left, but they retain the horses.

"Now if we can take the horses away before the owners get track of the affair, there won't be sufficient evidence to convict Fox.

"He can, then, you see, come back, stand trial, and save a thousand dollars, the amount of his bonds.

"Don't you see the point?"

"Go on—go on," said Phillips, with some excitement.

Broadbrim saw he had made a good impression on the man, and proceeded:

"If the horses are suffered to remain where they are until the owners come for them, Fox must sacrifice the amount of his bail, as you know that he cannot come and stand his trial with such evidence against him.

"It would send him to the penitentiary at once, but if you stand by me and lend me a helping hand, I think we can get them away."

"How can we do it?" asked Phillips, with a mingled expression of fear and satisfaction.

"If that can be done, it will be the saving of the bail money.

"How can it be done?" he repeated.

"Easy enough.

"You must get some one to swear the horses are my property, and I will claim and take them away.

"I am a stranger to everybody there, and no one will suspect but I am the real owner, and when the true owners come all they can say is, that some rascal has got their horses and run off with them; but as they can't swear to the horses, unless they first find them, of course they cannot convict Fox, and I have no fear of their catching me or the horses if I can get ten miles the start of them.

"Do you understand my plan now?"

"Yes; but still I am fearful that they will not give the horses up," said Phillips.

"Why not?"

"Oh, I don't know; I was only expressing my fears."

"They must give them up," said Broadbrim.

"That is the only process I know of to recover stolen property.

"All you have to do is to get some one to swear that I am the owner."

"Will they not require you to enter into bonds," said Phillips, "to appear against Fox at the next court?"

"I think not. I know I can promise to come, and not go.

"Now who will you get to swear that the horses are mine?"

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"There are lots of people in the neighborhood who will swear anything," replied Phillips.

"That won't do."

"It must be a person not known to the authorities."

"That's so," said Phillips, scratching his head.

"It wouldn't do to take any of my friends around here, but I can get lots of them down in Merker's Valley."

"Where's that?"

"A hundred miles from here."

"That will consume too much time," objected Broadbrim.

"I don't see that I can be detained so long, as I'm in a great hurry to get to Cleveland."

"My business here ought to have been attended to before this."

"However, I wouldn't hesitate at the loss of a few days if I can serve Fox."

"You are a true friend of his, and no mistake," said Phillips.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN UNCOMFORTABLE NIGHT.

Broadbrim was convinced that he had made a great impression on Phillips, and that the latter looked upon him now with every confidence.

His suggestion to the chief of police about the horses was one of the best moves the detective had yet made.

"Very well, then, that's settled," said Broadbrim. "If we succeed in getting the animals away we must leave the race horse where Fox can get it again."

"I am told he wouldn't take less than four thousand dollars for it," said Phillips, parenthetically.

"It is said to be the fastest quarter nag in the country."

"By the way, do you know where Fox is at present, so we can send him word where to find the horse if we succeed in getting him?"

"You ask me that which I cannot answer," replied Broadbrim; "I don't know where he is."

"As for the other horses," went on Phillips, "they are nothing extra, anyhow."

"I could let some of the boys take 'em North."

"At any rate, Fox wants the horses to be out of the way, so they cannot be in evidence against him."

"Didn't he suggest some way of disposing of them?" Broadbrim asked presently.

"Yes, he did."

"What did he suggest?"

"Burning the barn in which the horses are kept; it would be getting rid of them pretty effectually."

"Did you consider that a good suggestion?"

"No."

"How so?"

"Well, you see, the people at Bowling Green keep so close a watch that I dare not try it."

"Were I not certain that I'd be the first one suspected, I'd get some of the boys to do it."

"But you see under the circumstances I can't."

"I think my plan far and away the best," said Broadbrim. "It certainly would put an end to suspecting you."

"They wouldn't suppose you had any hand in it."

"That's right," said Phillips; "and now I'm precious glad you called on me."

"Nearly all the boys round here," he went on, "are afraid to go anything if one happens to get in trouble."

"If we only had a few fellows like you now, who would stick to us, and help us out of trouble when we got caught, they'd soon get sick of bothering us."

"Maybe so."

"I am sorry for one thing, though," pursued Phillips.

"What?"

"That you have so little time at your disposal."

"If you weren't so pressed, I'd ask you to go to Bloomington and see Tom English."

"He is a good lawyer and a very able man, too, and he always helps us when we're in a scrape."

"For a consideration, of course," grinned Broadbrim, winking.

"That's understood."

"No one works for nothing, least of all a lawyer."

"But English will ride night and day, and do everything in his power to get us clear."

"Then his charges are reasonable, and he is willing to take his pay in horses, or any kind of property the boys happen to have."

"A most considerate gentleman," laughed Broadbrim. "But I cannot afford the time to see him now."

"I guess we can get along without a lawyer in this case—that is, if you can find some one who is known at Bowling Green to go before the authorities and swear the horses are mine."

"Besides," the detective added, "every day's delay is dangerous, for you see the owners may come for the horses."

"What's done must be done in a hurry—you understand?"

"There's Tim Birch, living fifty miles from here. We can see him," said Phillips.

"No," objected Broadbrim, "that won't do. He's too young."

"If questioned closely, as he's liable to be, he may queer himself."

"Oh, then you have seen him?" said Phillips.

Broadbrim nodded.

"Well, what about his father, Old Crafty?"

"They can't queer him, and he will swear to anything you tell him."

"Well, I'd be willing to risk the old man."

"But confound it! he lives too far away."

"Here," pursued Broadbrim, showing Phillips specimens of his paper."

"You see now why I am in such a hurry."

"This stuff is all ready to date and sign, and I ought to be in Cleveland with it now."

Phillips examined the bank notes critically, and was loud in his praises.

"How much can you scare up like this?" he asked.

"A hundred thousand dollars easily; and I would not be idling away my time now were it not to get Fox out of his trouble."

"How did he get caught? I thought he was smart enough to take care of himself."

"And so he is."

"But I may as well tell you how his arrest came about."

"You see, Fox, Long and Birch came along together with four horses and stayed here a few days. I bought one of the horses."

"My brother-in-law was negotiating for the purchase of the other two, and Fox intended to take the racehorse with him."

"John didn't like to be seen about here on account of some old criminal charges against him in this county."

"So he and Birch left in the afternoon, and Fox intended to leave next morning."

"That same night a posse came from Bowling Green and arrested Fox and me, and took all the horses."

"The boys, as I understand, stole them in Western Illinois, and concluded they were out of danger with them here."

"The man who owned the horse which I had bought, got on their track and had followed them as far as Bowling Green."

"Fox and I had been in Bowling Green with the horses, and mine was recognized at once by the man's description."

"That very night they came down and took us."

"If they had waited another day Fox would have been off."

"You are well acquainted with the boys, I suppose?" said Broadbrim.

"With Fox and John Long, certainly; but I never saw Birch till he came here with them."

"I understand he's a very smart fellow, but rather too much of a dude."

"He likes lots of jewelry, and all that, and is too fond of displaying it."

"Fox, in my judgment, is the brainiest man of the three."

"If Long and Birch had followed his instructions, they'd never have been tracked."

"He instructed them to keep clear of the main road until they crossed the Wabash River."

"But after traveling fifty miles from where they raised the horses, they took to the highways, consequently there was no difficulty in tracking them."

"John's a bold, daring fellow, but he lacks prudence."

"It's a pity they didn't follow Fox's advice."

"Yes, a great pity."

It was now dark, and Broadbrim and Phillips returned to the house, his horse being attended to, meanwhile, by one of three men who came in and to whom the Quaker had been introduced.

"You, of course, will stop here to-night?" said Phillips.

"I don't see what else I can do," returned Broadbrim.

The detective was finally shown to a resting place in one corner

of the room, and one of the three men pointed out to keep him company; the other two, with Phillips, occupied another spare corner, while the two women entered a smaller apartment.

There was no light in the first room save the flickering blaze from a few dying embers on the hearth, but Broadbrim had no difficulty in arranging everything.

He placed his traveling bag under the side of the bed, covered it with his coat and vest, then placed his weapons where he could lay hands on them at a moment's notice, after which he stretched himself on the bed.

But he did not dare sleep, for if suspected, he would certainly be attacked before morning.

Long before Broadbrim had retired he had noticed that the evening was threatening for a storm.

At last it burst from above with terrific violence.

The vivid lightning streamed out in one continued blaze.

This was followed by terrible crashes of thunder, while the rain fell in torrents.

The grim features of the ruffians, made visible by the lightning flashes streaming through the crevices in the walls of the tumble-down frame building, served to complete a picture of fearful interest even in the breast of the dauntless Quaket.

And it is safe to say that Broadbrim never forgot this long, dismal and sleepless night for many a long year afterward.

Day dawned at length—a bright and glorious morning rising over the darkness and storm of the dreary night.

The three men got up and left the house, and Broadbrim saw no more of them.

The family soon after arose, and prepared breakfast, which was a repetition of what Broadbrim had served to him the night before—and a meal which he certainly did not relish.

About half an hour after breakfast, as Broadbrim and the others were seated on the open porch, a shrill whistle arose from the neighboring forest.

"That's Long"—not the John Long so frequently alluded to, but a cousin—"signaling for his grub," said Phillips, starting for the forest with a readiness which proved his sympathy for his brother-in-law's appetite.

He was gone about an hour, when he returned.

He said he had told his brother-in-law of Broadbrim's plans for recovering Fox's horses, and that he would be glad to see him, but dared not come to the house, and wished Broadbrim to come to him in the woods.

"I guess he'd like to have a look at some of that paper of yours," Phillips added.

"Well, direct me and I will go and see him," Broadbrim interjected.

"Go to the corner of the fence yonder, turn to the left into the woods, and whistle—so—and he will answer you," instructed Phillips.

CHAPTER XIV.

BAITING THE TRAP.

Broadbrim, taking his handbag, followed the directions given by Phillips.

Then, reaching the point indicated, he gave a clear, shrill whistle.

This was answered from a dense thicket, a few rods distant.

Broadbrim passed into the thicket, and found Long seated on a log.

He was a remarkably good-looking young man of twenty-two or three, with a complexion as fair as a woman's, a forehead high and broad, while his full, clear hazel eyes and chestnut hair made up one of the finest countenances one could wish to see.

His manner of living, and his constant fear of pursuit for criminal offenses, gave him a sort of suspicious watchfulness not altogether in keeping with his handsome, boyish face.

After asking several questions which Broadbrim answered to his satisfaction, they entered upon the important subject of getting the horses from Bowling Green.

Broadbrim's plan, as described by him to Phillips, appeared to meet his approval.

"Fox says he doesn't care for any of them but the racehorse.

"If it can be secured so he can get it, he will pay well for your trouble and delay," said Long.

"I know that," Broadbrim replied.

"And if I succeed in getting the animals, as proposed, I will

leave the horse about twenty miles above Trefe Haute, near the Wabash River, where it can be secreted.

"Then I can send word to Fox where he can find it, and hasten on to Cleveland, where I must be as soon as possible."

"You are going to Cleveland, you say?"

"Yes."

"If so, it will not be much out of your way to go and see Fox," said Long.

Broadbrim pricked up his ears.

Here was a bit of information that he did not quite expect.

"I don't know where he is," he interjected.

"I see."

"Well, he has gone to his father's, in the eastern part of this State, and I think I will stay here until you can get there and see him."

It was with difficulty that Broadbrim repressed a strong exclamation of pleasure, at being told of the present lurking-place of Fox; but endeavoring to conceal his satisfaction, he proceeded to remark on the subject of horses.

"It will require so much time to carry out our plans about the horses," he said, "that probably I shall not see Fox."

"If I succeed in getting them you had better write him that he will find the horse where I will leave it with a friend, near the Wabash River."

"That will do first-class."

"I will write at once."

"There is one thing," pursued Broadbrim, "you must not forget."

"What is that?"

"The witness to swear that the horses belong to me."

"Then you had better remain here while I send Phillips after Old Crafty, who will be the best witness I know of."

"The suggestion is good."

"But it won't do."

"It will consume too much time."

"Let me suggest a plan."

"Well?"

"I believe they're getting a little sick of keeping the horses."

"Perhaps if I go and claim them as my property I can get them without further trouble."

"Do you think so?" with a peculiar smile on his handsome face.

"I certainly do."

"I'm afraid you'll fail."

"I can try, anyway, and if they refuse to let the horses go, then we can send for Birch."

The young man thought for a moment, then readily assented to the proposition, seeing, maybe, that nothing better could be done.

In order to impress Long and Phillips more fully with the sincerity of his designs, and to prevent all suspicion, he requested that they would send a spy to Bowling Green that they might know if he succeeded in getting the horses, and if he did not he would then return to them.

Having got track of Fox, the main object of Broadbrim's visit, he was now, of course, only too anxious to get away.

Therefore, promising Long to call on him on his return, and to furnish him with a quantity of "paper," they separated.

Broadbrim also made the same promise to Phillips, who told him he knew a great many who would like some of the bank notes.

"The sheriff of Owen County," observed he, "is one of our friends."

"He always lets the boys know if there's anything on foot against them."

"If he had known when the posse came from Bowling Green to arrest Fox and me, he would have given us the straight tip, and we could have lit out."

After bidding farewell to Phillips and the others, and receiving their best wishes for his success, Broadbrim started for Bowling Green, which place he reached before nightfall.

At Bowling Green the detective met some men in search of two of the horses, and at his request they promised to keep their business secret for a short time.

He explained his object in making the request, as far as was necessary to gain their consent, then called on the chief of police with whom he had previously consulted.

Broadbrim informed the chief of his success, telling him that

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he had now only to take the horses away from Bowling Green, to accomplish his plans, and give him a clear track of Fox.

As the owner of the two horses had just arrived with a witness to prove his property, Broadbrim proposed that he himself should assume the character of the owner, pay the charges for their keeping, take them out of the town, and then deliver them to their rightful owner, who could proceed with them on his journey home.

Broadbrim would then take the racehorse to Terre Haute, leaving him with an official there.

This programme was assented to at once.

One thing only remained to make the chain of action, thus far, perfect.

When Fox was arrested at Bowling Green he employed a lawyer of that town named Thomson, a colleague of Tom English's, who was represented to Broadbrim as a shrewd, cunning man, and a fine pleader.

Fearing that Thomson might have noticed his movements sufficiently to suspect that some trap was being laid for his client, Fox, and accordingly give him notice of the state of things in time to enable him to escape, Broadbrim expressed a wish to see and converse with the lawyer before leaving the town.

The chief of police opposed this, stating that Thomson was so remarkably keen, that he feared he would see through the plot.

The Quaker resolved, however, to conduct the affair on his own judgment, so dispatched a messenger to Mr. Thomson, requesting him to call at the hotel as soon as his business would permit.

Thomson soon after entered the barroom where Broadbrim was seated, and in a hurried manner remarked:

"My name's Thomson."

"Who wishes to see me?"

"I am the person, sir," Broadbrim replied, rising.

"Can we get a private room?"

"Yes; come this way," said Thomson.

When they were seated, the detective went on with:

"I am informed, sir, that you are the attorney who defended my friend Fox, when he was arrested on the charge of stealing those horses."

"I am, sir."

"Do you still consider yourself his lawyer?"

"I do," replied the lawyer.

"Can I talk confidentially on his business with you?"

"Certainly."

"You won't betray me?"

"You can speak without fear or restraint upon any matter connected with Mr. Fox."

"But, hold on a moment, though."

Leaving his seat, the lawyer subjected the neighboring rooms and closets to a close scrutiny; then, shutting the doors, returned to his chair.

Seating himself at Thomson's side, Broadbrim put his hand on the attorney's shoulder, and, looking him full in the face, continued:

"Mr. Thomson, I will disclose my business without further preliminaries."

"I am a friend of your client's."

"While passing through the country near this point, I heard of his arrest and the detention of the horses."

"I have come here for the purpose of getting them away."

"I have succeeded in the attempt to prove that they are my property—have got them into my possession, in fact, and am now about to leave town with them."

"Consequently, you can inform Fox that he can come back, attend the court and save his bail."

"I have got everything arranged, and shall be off in a few minutes with all the horses."

"By Jove! that's a good one!" exclaimed the lawyer, delighted.

"I'm glad you succeeded."

"Be careful you're not suspected, though, before you get away."

"I wouldn't have the plot found out for a cool five hundred dollars."

Broadbrim said there was no danger of that.

"I have accomplished the most difficult part of the task," he went on.

"The people think it's all right, and don't suspect me."

"I have nothing to fear unless you betray me, and I'm not much afraid of that," he added, cheerfully.

"No, and you needn't be."

"It's a deuced clever trick—the best I ever knew," Thomson interjected.

"I will now tell you what I did before Fox left here."

"I wrote to Tom Parton at St. Louis; do you know him?"

"Yes, almost as well as I know Fox."

"Well, I wrote to Parton to send Jones, who is a noted jockey at St. Louis, down here to claim the horses and get them away, if he should have to cut their throats the first night."

"Well," said Broadbrim, "when Jones arrives you can tell him that Tom Browne has saved him the trouble."

"I will leave the racehorse in safe hands where Fox can get him, and then hasten on to Cleveland, where I should be now, in fact."

"Maybe you'd like to see Fox on your way," said Thomson. "If so, he's at his father's, not far from Centerville."

"You had better stop and see him, anyhow."

"He may be away when I get there on some speculation," objected Broadbrim.

"No; he'll remain till he hears from me what has been done with the horses."

"In that case I'll call on him, that is, if it's not too much out of my way."

"But for fear I should not, you had better write and let him know the particulars, also that he has nothing more to fear as far as the horses are concerned."

"I will so advise him by next mail," was the lawyer's response.

"That will fill the bill to a T," replied the Quaker, "and relieve his mind, too, of considerable anxiety."

"And, by the way, when we leave the room, perhaps you had better not speak to me, as you are known to have been my friend's attorney and there might be some one who would think it was not all right."

"But they must know of our retiring together and holding a private conversation," said Thomson.

"True."

"We will say that my business with you was to inquire if I was bound to pay the expenses of keeping the horses since they were taken from Fox."

"That will settle things," said the lawyer.

"They shan't hear anything from me."

They then left the room and separated, Thomson passing out the back way, so they might not be noticed together.

CHAPTER XV.

A CRITICAL SITUATION.

The news that the owner of the horses taken from Fox had arrived, claimed and proved his property, had now become general, and a large number of citizens had collected to witness the departure of the animals.

Everybody seemed satisfied.

The spy sent by Phillips, elated by Broadbrim's success in getting the horses, without the trouble of sending for Old Crafty, hastened back to tell the good news.

Thomson was gratified with the fortunate issue of the trick to save his client from the punishment his crime so justly merited—and the public rejoiced that the rightful owner had succeeded in recovering his stolen property, while only the few to whom Broadbrim had disclosed his real business, understood the farce.

Thomson approached the detective with a sly leer on his shrewd face, and exclaimed:

"Those rogues have put you to much trouble and expense."

"In future I would advise you to put little trust in strangers, and look after your property with a keener eye."

"Rest assured I'll not forget your advice, sir," was Broadbrim's reply.

Then he rode off, accompanied by the owner of the two horses, in the presence of a large crowd of the townspeople.

After proceeding a short distance, Broadbrim delivered the horses to their owner, then hastened with the celebrated race nag to Terre Haute, where he intended to leave it in charge of a deputy sheriff whom he knew—Hiscock by name.

From there he started for Indianapolis, a distance of seventy-five miles, and there met an official whom he had not seen in several years.

The man was a United States marshal, named Johnson.

Being intimately acquainted with Mr. Johnson, Broadbrim intrusted him with his secret, and endeavored to secure his services.

The marshal readily consented to accompany Broadbrim to Wayne County, and if successful in arresting Fox, to take charge of him and follow Broadbrim's instructions for his safe keeping, while the detective should pursue Long and Birch.

At an early hour the following morning they set out for Centerville, Wayne County.

Arriving here, they ascertained that Fox's father resided nine miles from Centerville, due southwest of that town.

They were told also that the elder Fox was a farmer of some wealth, and of very industrious habits, but of rough and uncouth manners, and poorly educated, though not suspected by any one of crime or dishonesty.

Broadbrim disclosed his business to the sheriff of Wayne County, and to the clerk of the court, both of whom were highly recommended to him.

The clerk of the court, by name, Gentles, ascertained from a man living near old Mr. Fox that his son was at home, and would remain there for several days, as he had not been at his father's home before in eight years.

Broadbrim was now at a critical point of his quest, as it seemed on the verge of success, yet with much remaining to be accomplished.

He had no doubt of capturing Fox, but he had no track of Long and Birch.

He was anxious, too, to get some clew to Fox's money concealed somewhere in Iowa, feeling confident that the money of which old Mr. Banks had been robbed was hidden with it.

After much deliberation he resolved to draw this information from Fox, if possible, and also to obtain from him some trace of Long and Birch.

This part of the scheme was one of peculiar difficulty, involving more danger than anything he had yet undertaken since the commencement of his perilous mission.

Fox was not only a man of superior sagacity and intelligence, but he had seen Broadbrim before when engaged on one of his great cases, and would no doubt recognize him at first sight.

The sheriff and the court clerk advised the arrest of Fox at once, but this would prove fatal to any further tracking of Long and Birch, as also to the recovery of the money, and thus Broadbrim was forced to differ in opinion with them.

He requested them to await his action for a short time before attempting the arrest.

Leaving the marshal at Centerville, Broadbrim started alone on horseback for the residence of Farmer Fox.

On his arrival he was told that the son was absent.

After a short conversation with the old man, during which the Quaker feigned much anxiety to continue his journey, he left, leaving a letter for Fox, in which he signed his name as Thomas Browne, and stated that Parton had received a letter from Thomson, the attorney at Bowling Green, in reference to the stolen horses. He alluded to the lawyer's proposition to have Jones put in use, and proceeded to relate his success in obtaining the animals. This letter concluded by Broadbrim expressing his regret that he could not see him, as he must be early in Cleveland the next day.

Broadbrim's object in penning the foregoing, as the reader will perceive, was to excite Fox's curiosity, and induce him to call on him before he left Centerville, and to make the matter more certain, he said to the farmer that, if Fox would come for him he would return with him, and stay till the leaving of the next train for Cleveland.

Returning to Centerville, Broadbrim disclosed his plan to his associates, requesting them to be in readiness to act as circumstances might require, and to make no movement calculated to excite suspicion.

About ten o'clock that night, while Broadbrim was standing in the shade of a lamp-post in front of the hotel, Fox rode up to the door, leading a horse with a saddle on, and addressing the landlord, who happened to be on the porch, said:

"Is there a gentleman stopping with you by the name of Browne?"

"There was such a gentleman here, but I think he has gone to Cleveland."

"You can ascertain whether he has gone by stepping down to the depot; there the ticket agent will tell you, who knows him."

When Fox left, Broadbrim requested the landlord to walk after him and tell him Mr. Browne was in his room, and to conduct him thither.

Going up to his room, Broadbrim threw himself carelessly upon the bed, and pretending to be nearly asleep, awaited the arrival of Fox.

In a few minutes the landlord conducted that worthy to the room and immediately withdrew.

The gas jet in the apartment was lowered, Broadbrim having taken this precaution while awaiting the return of Fox.

As the assassin of Banks approached the bed, Broadbrim leisurely raised himself and turned the gas on full.

Fox started back as he caught sight of the Quaker's countenance, but recovering himself in a measure, said in a faltering voice:

"This is not Mr. Browne?"

"Not exactly," replied Broadbrim, smiling.

"Have I not seen you before?"

"Very probably."

"You are a detective?"

"I was."

"And if I make no mistake, you are from New York, and your name is Broadbrim?"

"That is my name, when at home," the Quaker coolly replied, at the same time offering him his hand, which he took, although much excited.

Broadbrim placed a chair for Fox near the washstand and, sitting directly opposite, said:

"Well, Fox, I suppose you didn't expect to see me here?"

"No," Fox replied.

"I supposed it was Browne."

"But what brought you here?"

"We shall have but a short time to converse," Broadbrim rejoined, "as the train will be in shortly, and I must leave for Cleveland, so I will come to the point at once."

"You of course will understand the object of my calling by the contents of my letter, which I left with your father over the signature of Tom Browne."

"Yes, I saw it."

"Well?"

"I presume you did not expect such a favor from one of my kidney."

"In New York I am Broadbrim, when traveling I am Browne, and as I know from good authority that you are one of the boys, I will speak freely."

"I've had a long chat with Parton in St. Louis, and in consequence of which I recovered your horses, as you will learn from Thomson."

"It is true that I received a letter from him," said Fox, looking dazed from what he had heard.

"Well, I expected he'd write, for he told me he'd do so by the next mail."

"Broadbrim, you are the last man from whom I should have expected such a favor, or indeed one of any kind."

"There is that Jeffreys, who'd hang me if he could, blast him!"

"But it was a blanked good move on your part, and I don't know what to make of it."

"You will, though, very soon," smiled Broadbrim, "and some day I hope to have you do me as big a favor."

"How do you feel?" cheerily from the detective.

"Bad, blamed bad! The Bowling Green affair has vexed me exceedingly, but now I can go back and stand a trial."

"Certainly you can."

"When I first entered the room I thought I knew you, and concluded a trap had been laid to catch me, but I am satisfied that all is right or you would have known nothing of the letter from Thomson to Parton."

"Of course not. I knew that that of itself would be sufficient to convince you, and now I will acquaint you with my business to Cleveland—outside the line of private detective"—with a grin—"I find time for other things."

Broadbrim produced the "paper" sent him by William Pinkerton.

"How do you like it?" he asked.

Fox examined the bank-notes closely, and replied:

"First-rate."

"Fox, my dear fellow, better were never made."

"Rather risky for you to be going around with the 'stuff,'" observed Fox, dryly.

"You fellows, it would seem, are up to every game on the boards."

"Where were these notes got up?"

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"Cleveland."

"What amount have you?"

"Over a hundred thousand—and more if I want it."

"This is only a sample I've with me."

"Would you like to get some when I return?"

"I might take it, though, I don't like to deal in such stuff. It is attended with so much risk."

CHAPTER XVI.

BIDING HIS TIME.

It was plain that Fox did not care about handling the "stuff."

"Yes, it would be attended with considerable risk," he added.

"In that I think you're mistaken," Broadbrim interrupted. "If the article was indifferent—yes."

"But not with such paper as this."

"Well, you may be right. Though, for myself, I would not care a great deal to take a risk."

"By the way," Fox suddenly added, "were you not in that case of the Rideouts, with which Jeffreys had something to do, and for which the Rideouts were arrested?"

"Ostensibly I was," replied Broadbrim.

"But Jeffreys did all the work."

"It was a matter of money, and I partly undertook the job."

"They were charged with murder, which I oppose under all circumstances."

"There are ways enough for the boys to get money without killing men for it."

"And I have no doubt you're as much opposed to murder as I am."

"Well, that's the truth."

"If I had not thought so," Broadbrim pursued, "I would not have exerted myself so much to free you from the Bowling Green difficulty."

"If I take a man's horse he can buy another."

"If I take his money he can work and get more, but if I kill a man he is lost to his friends and to the world."

"Exactly as I feel," said Fox.

"But anything in the way of speculation I am in for."

"Now you understand me!"

The reader will perceive Broadbrim's object in assuming this position. He could see that Fox had in some way got to know he was engaged with Jeffreys on the Rideout case, and was partly instrumental in the arrest of the brothers.

The detective must therefore be consistent with his former course of conduct, and at the same time manage to gain Fox's confidence.

Besides, he was anxious to get some trace of Long and Birch, and he knew no other way of doing it save through Fox.

The latter was not yet aware that he was suspected of any participation in the murder of Mr. Banks, so at the close of the interview he appeared willing to give Broadbrim his full confidence, and he even urged him to go with him to his father's, promising to accompany him to the train to see him off to Cleveland the following morning.

Fearing that his inquiry at this time relative to Long and Birch would arouse his suspicions, Broadbrim concluded to accompany him home.

"I made up my mind to start for Cleveland to-night," he said, "but it will have to do now till to-morrow."

"It'll only be the loss of a few hours, anyway," said Fox.

As they passed from the room Broadbrim noticed that Johnson and the sheriff of Wayne county were ready with a posse to arrest Fox.

But a signal from the detective, unnoticed by his companion, prevented them from carrying their plan out, and so they passed out of the hotel without being interrupted.

It was midnight before they reached the farmhouse, and after a little further conversation and a smoke, they retired to rest in the same bed.

In the morning Broadbrim was kindly received by the family—though he would have preferred that they had treated him more distantly.

This was a phase of detective life that Broadbrim cared less about than any other; and, had Fox been anything but a cold-blooded murderer, he would have regretted the part he was playing.

Broadbrim was now in momentary expectation of Johnson with the posse.

Breakfast over, Fox prepared to accompany the detective to the railway station.

The detective was much disconcerted that the posse had not yet made their appearance, and was under the necessity of changing his previous arrangements.

He at least so expressed himself.

"Better stay till Monday morning," suggested Fox.

"Traveling on Sunday is not very pleasant."

To this Broadbrim, after some apparent reluctance, assented.

During the day he was in constant expectation of the arrival of the posse.

But from some misunderstanding on the part of Johnson, they did not make their appearance.

By this mistake, however, Broadbrim was enabled to take advantage of a most interesting conversation with his companion.

Having gained his confidence in all matters except those in which murder was concerned, he spoke freely upon every minor subject connected with the operations of the gang.

The Quaker's great object now was to gain intelligence of Long and Birch, and his conversation had that constantly in view.

"I suppose, Fox," said he, "that you've been operating this kind of business for a considerable length of time?"

"Yes, about ten years," Fox answered.

"In what section of the country have you mostly traveled?"

"My line of operations has been all through the Southern and Western States—especially the States bordering the Mississippi—generally near the river."

"You must have an extensive acquaintance with the boys?" prompted Broadbrim.

"Yes, I know hundreds of them!"

"Some have fixed habitations—others travel, and operate where they can make the most money!"

"I would like to get some fellow who is well acquainted with the South and West to help me to dispose of this 'paper,' as soon as I can get it ready, and share in the profits."

"How would such a job suit you?"

"I don't like that kind of business."

"It is too dangerous."

"One is liable at any time to be detected."

"What sort of business do you prefer, then?"

"Robbing."

"Why?"

"Because it's much safer than counterfeiting."

"I can raise a thousand dollars with less risk of detection than there is in passing one counterfeit bill."

"If, as you say, it is much the better and safer business, I should like myself to have a hand in it," said Broadbrim.

"And why shouldn't I mix the thing up as well as others? I don't see why I shouldn't."

"Nor do I."

"I have friends in all parts of the country, who keep a constant lookout; and, when they find a good sight, they let me know."

"Then I go and make the raise, pay them well for their trouble, and leave for some other part of the country as soon as possible."

"I've got thousands of dollars in this way, without being seen in the neighborhood where I've made the raise."

"You must frequently incur considerable risk?" said Broadbrim.

Fox laughed.

"In most cases," he replied, "I can enter a house in the night and search every part of it without giving an alarm."

"You can, eh?"

"Yes, I can."

"Sometimes I get two or three of the boys in company with me, and enter a house in disguise, and boldly demand the money of the frightened household."

"But do they not refuse to give up, when so demanded?" Broadbrim asked.

"No. I never had any one refuse yet."

"They are always so badly frightened, they are willing to give up their money, and glad to get off at that."

"What would you do if they refused?"

"I'd flash a knife or a pistol under their nose, and, if I could not frighten them, I'd let them go."

"I suppose you have plenty of money, so that it would not have embarrassed you to have paid up your bail bonds at Bowling Green?" said Broadbrim.

"H'm! I could have paid much more than that amount without inconveniencing myself."

"I have a good deal of money loaned out."

"Besides, I've about ten thousand dollars buried."

"And I've paid money enough to get some of my friends out of scrapes to make half a dozen men rich."

"Did you ever get pinched before you were arrested at Bowling Green?" Broadbrim questioned

CHAPTER XVII.

A CLEVER CAPTURE.

For some reason, Fox looked amused at Broadbrim's query; then, laughing heartily, replied:

"Yes: I was arrested one time in Iowa, when the mob shot one of my pals."

"But it so happened that they could prove nothing against me."

"So, for spite, they tied me up to a tree, and whipped me nearly to death, then let me go."

"I don't see much in that to laugh at," said Broadbrim.

"Well, no; you are right. There is not much to laugh at in a man being flogged nearly to death."

"Some of them may have to pay for it one of these days, however, and pay dearly, too."

"But there is no use saying anything more on that head; it is past and gone, and only in my memory."

"Of course not. What was the name of the man who was shot by the mob?"

"Browne—and my first horse was stolen under his instructions; and since I have 'raised,' maybe, a hundred and fifty, and never once got caught till the Bowling Green affair, and I wouldn't then if the boys had followed my advice."

"But they thought they knew better, and that got me into trouble."

"Tom Parton told me that John Long and Ned Birch were with you when you left St. Louis."

"How did it happen that they were not arrested with you?"

"I will tell you."

"They left Phillips', where I was pinched, a few hours before the posse got there and went down to New Albany, on the Ohio River, at which place they intended to take a steamboat for Cincinnati."

"After that they were to go to Cleveland."

"Then I may meet them."

"Do you think," asked Broadbrim, "that they will assist me in disposing of my 'paper'?"

"If you happen to see them, I think they would, but they will leave before you get there."

"They meant to stop in Cleveland only a few days."

"Then they go to Berkshire, Delaware County, to meet a man named Boyd, to make a small 'raise.'

"They are probably there now, and no doubt have made the 'raise' before this time."

"Who got up the 'sight' for them?"

"Boyd."

"He used to live there, so is quite familiar with the country."

"He once told me if we could go out there that we could 'raise' nine or ten thousand dollars."

"Maybe we could."

"I am now expecting letters from Long and Birch, telling me where I could meet them."

"A man named Belmont got me a 'sight' up on the Wabash River that I must attend to."

"It is only small—a few thousand dollars—and, if you like to join with me, why, we'll share the spoils."

"What kind of a 'sight' is it?" Broadbrim asked.

"I will tell you."

"There is an old gentleman living near Belmont's station, who has at times loaned money to him, which in a few days he'd return, noticing in what place the old man would deposit it."

"Belmont says that he keeps his money in the under bed, on which the old chap and his wife sleep."

"They're very pious people, and attend church regularly every Sunday."

"Well, I intend to go on Saturday night, and secrete myself in a piece of timber, a short distance from the house, and watch until the family are gone to church, then enter the house, rake down the cash, and put out with it."

"You don't want me in that, when you can do it singlehanded," said Broadbrim.

"Besides," he added, "it wouldn't be fair to you."

"Now, let me advise one thing—when you return to make that 'raise,' you had better stop and get the racehorse, as it will be but little out of your way."

"I suppose it'll be necessary for you to give me an order to get it before you leave?" said Fox.

"You can't get it that way."

"Why not?"

"Because it's too valuable to lose, and I thought it well to guard against tricks."

"Now, let me give you directions how to act," went on Broadbrim.

"First, you go up the Wabash River, on the east side, twenty miles above Terre Haute."

"You will see a farmhouse and barn."

"Morris is the name of the farmer."

"Inquire of him for the horse left by a Mr. Browne."

"He will ask if you have an order from Mr. Browne; you will answer 'No.'

"He will ask, 'How do you expect me to give you the horse, then?'

"You will say, 'By giving the proper sign.'

"He will say, 'What sign?'

"Upon which you will cross your wrists at right angles, and repeat the words, 'I came, I saw, I conquered,' when, without further comment, you will get your horse."

"The Latin of it would be briefer, I should think," said Fox, laughing.

"However, it's better than an order, and will prevent deception. By Jove, I should never have thought of that plan!"

"Broadbrim, you're a keen fellow, if ever there was one."

"Not at all," said the Quaker.

"After the trouble I had to get the beast into my possession, I thought at least I would be smart enough to take care of him."

"That's so."

"To what place will Long and Birch direct their letter when they write to you?" asked Broadbrim, when the foregoing was arranged.

"They will write to Belmont, to tell me where to meet them when I go back to make that 'raise.'

"I presume Belmont has a letter from them by this time."

"Do Long and Birch understand their business sufficiently well to operate successfully?"

"Well, I guess they do," replied Fox.

"You couldn't get two better men in the whole of the United States, and Birch is a bit of a dandy, at that."

"He's fond of dress, conceited, but that's about his only fault."

"Do you know where Tom Browne is now?"

And Broadbrim described the Browne who had to do with the robbery and murder of old Hanson and his son-in-law.

"No, I don't."

"Reckon he's out of the country."

"The States got too hot for him, and I guess he's made a bolt for Europe."

"When?"

"I don't know."

If this was so, it put an end to all search for Browne, and Broadbrim, in his own mind, gave the matter up as a bad job.

Thus the day wore on, in conversation on various topics connected with the gang.

One little incident in his intercourse with Fox is worthy of mention, as showing how nearly Broadbrim's projects were defeated by a momentary carelessness on his own part.

While Fox was talking, the Quaker had his memorandum-book in his hand, taking down the names and places of residence of some of the gang, when the alert eye of his companion discovered in it a paper headed, "Reward."

"What is that reward?" he inquired.

With as little hesitation as possible, Broadbrim replied:

"A reward offered for some stolen property."

At the same time, in an indifferent manner, he closed the notebook, and put it in his pocket, continuing the conversation on the subject on which he had taken the notes.

The reward was, in fact, one offered for the arrest of the murderers of old Mr. Banks, which Broadbrim had imprudently placed in his notebook.

Having, in this interview, accomplished all he desired relative to the tracking of Long and Birch, the Quaker retired to bed with Fox, as he had done the previous night.

OLD BROADBRIM WEEKLY.

He was still waiting, in anxious suspense, for the arrival of the posse, but heard nothing from Johnson.

The care and anxiety under which he was laboring did not prevent Broadbrim from sleeping soundly.

It was daylight before he awoke.

After breakfast, Fox saddled his horses, and prepared to accompany Broadbrim to Centerville, which they reached about ten in the morning.

At the hotel, he noticed Johnson, with the sheriff and his posse, ready to make the arrest.

Broadbrim gave them the signal to hold back for the present.

Fox ordered his horses to the stable, and went down the street to see an "old friend," saying he would return within an hour.

This gave Broadbrim all the time he needed to arrange his plans with Johnson and the sheriff.

He instructed Johnson to arrest Fox on a feigned charge of stealing a racehorse in Missouri, and to arrest himself on a charge of counterfeiting.

The detective instructed him to have Fox very closely searched, in order to discover if he had any money, or other articles in his possession which were taken from Mr. Banks at the time of the robbery and murder.

The blank sheets of bank notes which would be found on Broadbrim would be sufficient to detain him to answer to the charge of counterfeiting.

Broadbrim would then give bail, while Fox would be incarcerated without bonds.

While Fox was in jail, Broadbrim would proceed in pursuit of Long and Birch, keeping Fox entirely ignorant of the part he was playing, as also the fact that he was at all suspected of the murder of Mr. Banks.

The detective desired this course to be adopted for two reasons —first, that the gang should not learn that Fox was arrested on the charge of being concerned in the murder of Banks, as others connected with him in that affair would take alarm, and escape before he could complete his arrangements against Long and Birch, and secure the arrest of all the murderers.

Broadbrim's other reason was that, after effecting the capture of Long and Birch, he would return to Centerville, suffer himself to be thrown into jail with Fox, on a feigned charge.

He then intended to inform Fox that he was suspected of being one of the murderers of Mr. Banks, and that arrangements were in progress by means of which the authorities would convey him to Montrose, to answer the charge before the proper legal tribunals.

At this stage of the plot, Broadbrim intended, if Fox appeared sufficiently alarmed, to propose to him that he should bribe the jailer to let him escape, upon the payment of three thousand dollars.

He knew that, for the purpose of raising the proposed amount, it would be necessary for Fox to have recourse to the sum of money which he had buried somewhere in Iowa.

In this way Broadbrim hoped to draw from Fox a disclosure of the place where the money was concealed, and so recover the amount of which old Mr. Banks was robbed.

He then intended to convey Fox, together with the other murderers, to Montrose.

The Quaker, desiring to complete some further arrangements with Fox before his arrest, requested Johnson and the sheriff to delay it until he should give them the signal.

When Fox returned to the hotel, Broadbrim ordered a private room and some refreshments, over which they agreed upon an arrangement for future co-operation in business.

Broadbrim was to proceed to Cleveland, finish and dispose of the hundred thousand dollars of counterfeit paper, then return to the Wabash River, and get possession of the racehorse.

Fox was to go and "raise" the "sight" got up by Belmont, get discharged on his liabilities on the bail bonds at Bowling Green, and then, with Long and Birch, meet Broadbrim on the Canada line; from thence they were to proceed through Canada and the Eastern States, robbing, horse-racing, etc.

All the time this plan was being fully determined upon, Broadbrim was seated near the window of the room, from which he gave the signal for the arrest.

A few moments after, a slight tap was heard at the door.

In response, Broadbrim went to the door, and opened it, when Johnson, at the head of half a dozen men, entered the room.

"These are the men! Secure them!" cried the marshal.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE END OF THE GANG.

The words had scarcely left the marshal's lips, when some of the men seized Broadbrim by the legs, arms, and throat, while others took hold of Fox in the same way.

"What is the meaning of this, gentlemen?" exclaimed Broadbrim, endeavoring to break away from the men who held him.

"You will find out soon enough," replied Johnson, gruffly.

Then they were forced from the room, up a flight of stairs to the third story, into the same apartment in which Broadbrim had first met Fox.

There they were stripped to the skin, and searched, without further explanation.

Nothing was found on the person of Fox, excepting fifty dollars in good money.

In searching Broadbrim, the posse found a brace of "six-shooters," a dirkknife, together with some of the "paper" sent to him by Pinkerton.

While they were undergoing the search, the marshal asked Broadbrim's name.

"Browne," replied the Quaker, promptly.

"Your name may be Browne, and it may be something else," returned the marshal, dryly; "but, gentlemen, I have nothing to do with this Mr. Browne, as he calls himself."

"Appearances are against him, certainly, and I hope justice will be done him."

"I have a warrant, however, for Mr. Fox, charging him with stealing a racehorse in Missouri, and shall, accordingly, take him back with me."

All this, of course, had been previously arranged, and the words, so to speak, put in the marshal's mouth by the Quaker.

To the foregoing harangue, Broadbrim replied:

"The horse was taken from Fox, and detained in Bowling Green for several days, but a short time since a rascal calling himself Browne came to Bowling Green, claimed the horse, and took it away."

"But," added the Quaker, naively, "there is a man on his track, and I reckon he'll have the horse by the time I get back."

"H'm!" said Johnson. "But you are not out of the scrape yourself yet."

"Perhaps you had better obtain the services of a lawyer before you count your chickens, and see what he can do for you."

Later in the day, Broadbrim was bailed, according to arrangement, while Fox was lodged in jail, a prey to the most conflicting emotions.

And so the man supposed by Broadbrim to be the principal actor in the Banks murder was secured at last.

Considering Fox in safe hands, Broadbrim, with renewed hope and confidence, proceeded on the track of Long and Birch.

After leaving Centerville, the detective went to Columbus, Ohio, following out some instructions given him by Fox.

He visited the hotels, and examined the registers; but, not finding the names of Long and Birch, or any trace of them, he next proceeded to Berkshire, in Delaware County, about twenty-four miles north of Columbus.

He reached Berkshire late in the afternoon, and stopped at a tavern kept by a man named Maltby.

After taking some refreshments, he inquired of Mr. Maltby about two men, without mentioning their names, but describing Birch and Long as minutely as possible.

After a pause, as if to summon something to his recollection, Maltby replied:

"There were two men answering your description who called here eight days ago, traveling toward the East."

"They said they were going to Scranton, and from there to New York."

This unfavorable intelligence somewhat depressed Broadbrim, and he was at a loss what course to pursue.

During this momentary hesitation, Maltby watched the Quaker's face, as if to divine his motive.

He inquired whether or not Broadbrim had any particular business with the men.

"Not so very particular," replied the detective.

"I should have been glad to see them, though."

"It would have been more to their advantage, however, than to my own."

Broadbrim could not fail but perceive that Maltby was not only suspicious, but anxious, so he pursued, carelessly:

"My business is not of a very urgent nature."

"Some other time will, perhaps, do as well."

"If you will tell me what it is," said Maltby, "I may be able to inform them of it."

Broadbrim was now fully alive to what kind of a man Maltby was, so he answered accordingly:

"Well, I suppose you may be trusted?"

"These two men I wish to see and myself are joint owners of a fine racehorse now in Indiana."

"I have made up a race for a purse of a thousand dollars, which is to be run next month."

"The smallest of these two men, whose name is Long, is well acquainted with the qualities of the horse, and has ridden him at several races, and I wanted him to ride this race now."

"Besides, as they are part owners, they would, doubtless, like to be present at the race."

"However, as they are gone, I may as well return, and get some one else to ride the horse."

"It occurs to me," said Maltby, after a moment's thought, "that they may be at Dresden, on the Ohio canal, now—from where they intended leaving for the East."

"It's just as well for you to try, as you may overtake them, you know, and get your friend to ride instead of a stranger."

Suspecting that Maltby was one of the "boys," Broadbrim ventured on a bold question, and asked him:

"Has Long and Birch been speculating in this part of the country?"

"Not a great deal."

"They were not known by these names when stopping with me."

"Very likely."

"By what names did they call themselves?" Broadbrim asked.

"Anderson and Belcher."

"H'm! I've known them travel under those names before," said the detective, carelessly.

"But I suppose I must return without seeing them."

"Let me ask you one question before I go, however."

"Maltby"—addressing him familiarly, and tickling him on one side—"don't you occasionally speculate a little yourself?"

"In what way?" asked the landlord, coolly.

"Give me your solemn promise not to betray me, and I will speak more freely," interjected Broadbrim.

"Have no fear; I can keep a secret as well as any other man."

Broadbrim took the blank bills from his pocket, and showed them to him.

"Would you like some of these?" he asked.

"How do you like the looks of them?"

"Blanked well!"

"Have you plenty on hand?" Maltby queried, with a twitching of the mouth, which showed he was greatly excited.

"What you see," replied Broadbrim, "is only a sample. When I reach Cleveland, I can forward you as much as you like, and you can use a large amount around this part of the country."

"You see, it is nearly as good as the genuine bill."

"By —, it is that!" cried Maltby, with some enthusiasm.

"I'm glad you see it in my light," calmly pursued Broadbrim.

"You can make a barrel of money by going into this speculation, if you half try."

"I believe so."

"But do you know," declared Maltby, frankly, "I feared you at first?"

"I suspected you were an officer, in pursuit of the boys for some offence."

"There's a friend of Long's and Birch's who'll be here this evening."

"What's his name?"

"Belmont. And he will know where Birch and Long are."

"You'd better wait till he comes this evening. I'm sure he'll be glad to see you."

"Does he really know where my friends are?"

"Yes."

Of course, it was not hard for Maltby to persuade Broadbrim to stay with him till the next day.

After dark Belmont came, and was pointed out to Broadbrim by the landlord, on his entrance to the bar.

The detective at once introduced himself as an old acquaintance of Fox's, and, after some unimportant conversation, remarked:

"Mr. Belmont, as Fox assured me that you were an old and intimate acquaintance of his, and one of the 'boys,' I shall take the liberty of speaking freely; and I presume that I have nothing to fear in disclosing my business to you?"

"What is Fox doing now?" Belmont asked, casually.

"Nothing."

"He's had some trouble since Long and Birch separated from him, and was arrested with some horses the boys had 'raised' near St. Louis, but is out now on bail."

"I succeeded in getting the horses away, therefore there is no evidence against him, and he will eventually get clear."

"He told me you had got up some few 'sights' here, and that Long and Birch had come to help you 'raise' them."

"Yes," Belmont answered; "but we haven't accomplished much yet."

"Does Maltby know you?"

"I told him my name, and that I was after Long, to ride their horse in a race to be run next month for a purse of a thousand dollars; but I've told him nothing of yours or the boys' business here."

"That was right."

"Maltby is a good fellow, but we dare not tell him all our affairs."

"He's not quite discreet enough, you see."

After this, Broadbrim had a long conversation with Belmont, as to his business with the "bank bills," his proposed journey to Cleveland, etc., etc.

"I shall have a hundred thousand dollars ready as soon as two men can date and sign the bills," he went on.

"I would like very well to show Long and Birch a sample, and find how much of it they'll take."

It was arranged by Belmont, after some reflection, that Broadbrim—or Browne, as he called himself—should meet Birch and Long that night.

This is what he had been all along hoping and working for, and Broadbrim had the most difficult job of his life to conceal the satisfaction this news afforded him.

"I guess you had better bring them here," he said, carelessly, though at that moment he was in a seventh heaven of delight.

"No; that won't do," replied Belmont, decisively.

"In the first place, I don't want any one here to see them; in the second place, I should like you to come out with me; it will be more prudent, and better for all concerned, you understand."

"Very well," agreed Broadbrim.

"It shall be as you say."

After further conversation on ordinary topics, Belmont left, promising to call for the Quaker at nine o'clock next night.

That evening Broadbrim spent pleasantly at Maltby's, and about midnight retired to his room, to think out his plans for the following evening.

He had no doubt of arresting Long and Birch, and he could see very clearly that his long and arduous quest was drawing to an end, and, with this pleasant array before his mind, he fell asleep.

Next day Broadbrim paid a visit to the chief of police, and, having the utmost confidence in him from what he had heard in other quarters, disclosed the secret of his mission.

"You intend going with Belmont to-night?" said the chief.

"Unquestionably," replied Broadbrim.

"When he comes for me, I shall go with him, as a matter of course."

"I shall never have a better chance of arresting those men."

"But Belmont may be leading you into a trap?"

"However, to prevent that, I shall follow you up, and take a few trustworthy men with me."

"It will be tough if we can't get the better of them."

Then a plan was proposed by Broadbrim, and adopted, and, after everything had been satisfactorily arranged, Broadbrim went back to the hotel.

At nine o'clock that night Belmont put in an appearance, according to appointment.

The chief of police and five other men were watching in the neighborhood, and had seen Belmont go into Maltby's.

"I see you are as good as your word," said Broadbrim, shaking Belmont's hand.

"You saw the boys?"

"Yes; and I guess you had better start with me at once. It will take us about an hour to get to the place."

"Where is it?"

"In a hazel thicket, one side of the high road, and, as the night is dark, we can go along there without being followed."

"The people hereabouts are very suspicious, and, if they saw us leaving together, they might think there was something in the

OLD BROADBRIM WEEKLY.

wind, and they wouldn't rest satisfied until they found out what that was."

"There is nothing like being cautious," said Broadbrim, laughing.

"No, there is not, especially in Berkshire."

"So I'll go up the road first, and you follow in about ten minutes or so."

"I'll wait for you."

And, so saying, Belmont left the tavern, and proceeded up the road.

Broadbrim had just time to make connection with the chief of police and his posse, and give them a few instructions, when he, too, left the tavern, going in the direction taken by Belmont some ten minutes previously.

Belmont was waiting for him, about a quarter of a mile up the road.

Stealing along in the darkness, in their rear, were the chief of police and his men.

"How far is this thicket you mentioned?" asked Broadbrim, as he came up to Belmont.

"Between three and four miles," replied the latter.

"We can do it easily within an hour."

"Have you arranged upon any signal?"

"Oh, yes. The hoot of an owl, three times repeated."

"But come on; we're losing time here, and the boys are impatient to see you."

The two men struck out now at a good, smart pace, while Broadbrim kept up a running fire of questions on one subject or the other.

The object of this was to deaden the sounds that came from behind, and which might be inadvertently made by the chief and his party.

The hazel thicket was at last reached.

"Is this the place?" asked Broadbrim, as his companion stopped.

"Yes. There in that thicket."

"Then give the signal," said the detective.

"I am going to," and Belmont hooted like an owl three times, as agreed upon.

To this signal came an almost immediate response.

Then followed a sudden crashing in the recesses of the timber, a noise as of dried twigs and brambles being scrunched, and a few moments later two men bounded into the road.

"Is that you, Belmont?" exclaimed one of the men.

It was Long.

"Yes."

"And you have brought him, all right?"

"Yes; he is here."

"I hope we haven't kept you waiting, gentlemen," said Broadbrim, stepping forward.

Something in his voice made the newcomers start back.

"That's not Browne!" cried Birch, with an oath.

"Not Browne! What do you mean?" Belmont demanded, as it gradually dawned upon him that something was wrong.

"No, you fool; it's a detective!" exclaimed Long.

Before he could get another word out, the chief and his men came up, and sprang on them.

There was a desperate struggle for a moment or two in the darkness, when Long and Birch each found his wrists encircled by a pair of handcuffs.

In the confusion and scuffle, Belmont was lost sight of, and escaped.

On searching Birch later, in the Berkshire police station, fifty dollars in money was found on him, two revolvers, a bowie-knife, a valuable gold watch, which, from the description Broadbrim had with him, answered to the one which had been stolen from Mr. Banks on the night of his murder.

Birch refused to give any account of himself, and declined answering all questions.

Long also adopted the same course of conduct.

But they were not informed at the time that they were arrested on the charge of murder.

That came later.

Broadbrim now set about arranging his programme for the removal of his prisoners to Montrose, Iowa.

To do this, he had to obtain the necessary requisition papers from the governor of Indiana, in which, without much difficulty, he succeeded.

Meanwhile, Broadbrim communicated with Johnson, the United States marshal, and requested him to take Fox on to Montrose—first obtaining the requisition papers in his case.

About the same time as the arrest of Long and Birch occurred, Jeffreys, acting on the Quaker detective's instructions, got a posse together, and called at Devil's creek.

But Old Devil's-hoof and his sons, having learned in some way of the proposed visit, got out of the State with the utmost possible dispatch, and thereafter all trace was lost of them, as well as of many others of the gang connected in some way with the numerous murders and robberies committed in that section.

Broadbrim, as soon as he had obtained the requisition papers from the governor of Indiana, removed his prisoners to Montrose, and when he had securely lodged them in jail there, informed them of what crime they were accused, and the evidence that could be brought to prove that they had murdered Mr. Banks.

Birch, finding himself safely lodged in jail, with no hope of escape, and the prospect of a speedy trial, intimated his willingness to make some disclosures.

He did so, and in his confession tried in every possible way to exonerate himself.

He admitted subsequently that he participated in the murder of Mr. Banks, and that he had a personal knowledge of the whole affair.

He finally got admitted as State's evidence, appearing against Fox, Long, Jackson and some others, whose names at this stage it is unnecessary to refer to.

He described the robbery and murder of Mr. Banks exactly as it had occurred, and in this testimony he was corroborated by some other witnesses who turned up.

The final outcome was that Fox, Long, Jackson and a few more confederates in their various criminal offenses, got sentences varying from twenty years to life imprisonment.

Fox, Birch and Jackson barely escaped hanging; but this punishment had due effect on other members of the gang, who got away from Newtown and Montrose soon after the sentences, going farther West—to Nebraska and Dakota, where many of them cast the old life aside and evolved into more honest ways.

What ever became of Tom Browne, one of the assassins of Old Hanson and his son-in-law, is not known to this day, and is not likely to be known, if present indications count for anything.

The Quaker detective was satisfied with the success of his mission, and the five thousand dollars which he had received for his trouble.

Nor indeed did Jeffreys go without reward.

The State paid him two thousand five hundred dollars for his services.

THE END.

The next issue, No. 15, is entitled "Old Broadbrim Forcing Their Hands; or, The Panel Thieves of the Tenderloin." This is one of the most exciting cases in which the great Quaker detective was ever engaged, and one which brought into play all his cleverness of mind and bodily strength. It was a gigantic battle against awful odds, the narrative of which will command the most wrapt attention.

THINGS TO LAUGH AT.

Speedily Spent.

Two young men of this city were talking in the post-office corridor the other day, and one of them said:

"Jack, I've sworn off smoking—sort of a New Year resolution, you know. I suppose you have taken some sort of a pledge, haven't you?"

"No," replied his friend, "not one. I tried it last year, and failed."

"How was that?"

"Well, I have always been a sort of spendthrift, as you know, so last New Year's day I said to myself:

"Jack, every one else is making some sort of a resolution, why not make one yourself?" So I resolved to save a little money for a rainy day. That afternoon I placed a ten-dollar note carefully away, and—the very next day it rained."

Mike O'Brien's Twins.

Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien were trying to find names for their twin babies, who, by the way, were girls.

It was decided that Mike, the father, should name them. After casting about, and finding no names that exactly suited him, he decided to end the strain on his mind, and named them Kate and Duplicate.

In the course of time, another pair of twins came, and they were boys. It was now the husband's turn, and he wanted his wife to christen the boys.

Imagine his feelings when the mother told him one day she had named them Pete and Repeat. But, when the third pair came, the father grew frightened, and named them Max and Climax.

A Live "Canthook."

Patrick and Mr. Smith were hauling logs one day, when Pat was dispatched to the barn for the canthook.

Now, Pat had never heard of a canthook before, and had no idea of what it was, but he thought he would have no trouble in finding one.

He was gone about half an hour, and Smith was going to see what had become of him, when he saw Pat coming up the hill leading a yearling heifer.

"What the h— are you doing with that d—n calf, you fool?" shouted Smith. "Didn't I send you after the canthook?"

"Well," said Pat, "she is the only thing I could find that couldn't hook."

Waiting for a Beard.

A smooth-faced dude entered a barber shop and asked to be shaved. After carefully covering his face with lather the barber sat down and began to read the paper.

"I say, bahbah," began the dude, "what are you awaiting foh?"

"For your beard to grow so I can shave you," replied the heartless barber.

Pat's Ignorance.

Two Irishmen had just landed, their names Mike and Pat, respectively. After traveling around town for nearly twenty-four hours, they succeeded in finding a cheap boarding house. The landlady of the boarding house was in the habit of buying some new thing to eat, only on a Saturday. This week it happened to be pies.

Mike and Pat, who had been eating hash for the last four days, decided to change their diet that very night, and without the landlady's consent.

After the boarders and other occupants of the house had retired, Mike decided to slip downstairs and have some pie. Mike did slip. He fell the full length of the stairs, and ended his trip of gravitation by landing on the wash-boiler.

The next thing that troubled the night air was the below of the landlady.

"Who is that?" screeched she.

"Mee-e-oo ow," was Mike's only reply.

This satisfied the landlady. Mike had some pie, and retreated back to his bed, after stubbing his toe. The agility with which Mike got in bed caused Pat's equilibrium to be disturbed. Of course, Mike had to explain the reason of his absence. Mike added to his explanation:

"Pat, if youse run up ag'in anyt'ing, remember, youse is a cat."

Pat proceeded on his disastrous journey. It may be added that the only thing big about him were his feet. He fell over the clothesbasket at the top of the stairs, but was saved from falling by the number of cubic inches his feet took up. He succeeded in reaching the pie floor without causing any anxiety in the front room. He reached the cupboard, and was in such readiness to have some pie that, instead of picking up the plate on which the pie was situated, he grabbed the pie's circumference, which was composed of crust. Of course, a fresh-baked pie could not stand this tremendous strain. The outcome of this mistake, in geometrical sequence, was that the plate was attracted by Pat's feet—the outcome of which was a hideous yell.

"Who's that?" was bellowed again.

Pat was on the verge of telling her to mind her business, when Mike's warning dawned on his top-piece.

"Oi'm a cat!" shouted Pat.

Up in a Balloon.

Uncle Si went to Chicago to see the sights. When he got there, he went to the Masonic Temple. He wanted room and board. They asked him his name, and he said:

"Benjamin Morgan, from Morgansville, Blaine County, New York."

So they gave him a room on the seventeenth story. He took the elevator, and, when he got nearly to the top, he asked:

"When will the balloon stop?"

INFORMATION FOR THE CURIOUS.

Readers of the "Old Broadbrim Weekly" will receive answers to questions which may puzzle them in these columns.

Angler, Boston, Mass.—Fishing lines may be waterproofed by placing them in a mixture composed of one pint of boiled linseed oil and a quarter pound of beeswax melted in a porcelain pot in boiling water. Then stretch the line out in a dry place, removing the superfluous liquid by rubbing with a piece of sponge or a piece of rag held between the forefinger and thumb. Do not use the line until perfectly dry. This preparation not only waterproofs, but also preserves the line.

G. G. (Cincinnati, Ohio).—The Thirty Years' War in Germany, which began in 1618 and ended in 1648, left the country cut up into a number of petty States, whose rulers were monarchs in fact, if not in name. In other words, "Germany was merely a maze of little despotisms, among which a few larger States were endeavoring to obtain a voice in the councils of Europe." 2. It was the coalition of Austria, Russia, Prussia, Sweden and Great Britain, which re-established Germany's independence (1813-15).

Tattoo (Decatur, Ala.)—1. To make India ink take eight parts lampblack, sixty-four parts water, four parts fine pulverized indigo well boiled till the greater portion of the water is evaporated; then add five parts gum arabic, two parts bone glue, one part extract of succory; boil till the mixture is as thick as paste, then mold in wooden forms. 2. Tattooing is simply to color the flesh, indelibly by pricking in fluids or dye-stuffs. 3. If you have not received the library by this time please write us again. 4. Handwriting fair.

E. G. K. (Des Moines, Iowa).—For "blacking" gun-barrels, two ounces of solution of nitric acid, four ounces of tincture of steel, three ounces of spirits of wine, three ounces of sweet spirits of niter, one ounce of vitroil blue, a pint and a half of rain-water. Scour the barrel smooth; remove all grease with lime, then coat with the mixture freely with a piece of sponge, but not so as to run about the barrel. Let stand in a cool place for about ten hours; then remove to a warm room, and let it remain there till dry, when the rust will fly off, and not be sticky or streaky.

L. M. (Lafayette, Ind.).—By one-horse power is meant a force strong enough to raise up 33,000 pounds one foot high in a minute. James Watt, the noted mechanician, engineer and scientist, famous as the improver and almost of the inventor of the steam engine, established the horse-power unit, and the figures were fixed in the following curious manner: He found that the average horse of his district could raise 22,000 pounds one foot a minute, and that this was the actual horse-power. At that time, however, Watt was employed in the manufacture of engines, and customers were so hard to find that it was necessary to offer extra inducements. So, as a method of encouraging them, he offered to sell engines, reckoning 33,000 foot-pounds to a horse-power. Thus he was the means of giving a false unit to one of the most

important measurements in the world, as, in reality, there are no horses to be found that can keep at work raising 33,000 pounds one foot a minute.

Enquirer (Manchester, Iowa).—1. There is no preparation that will make your hair curl. If nature will not curl it, you will have to do the same as the girls, put it up in paper when you go to bed.

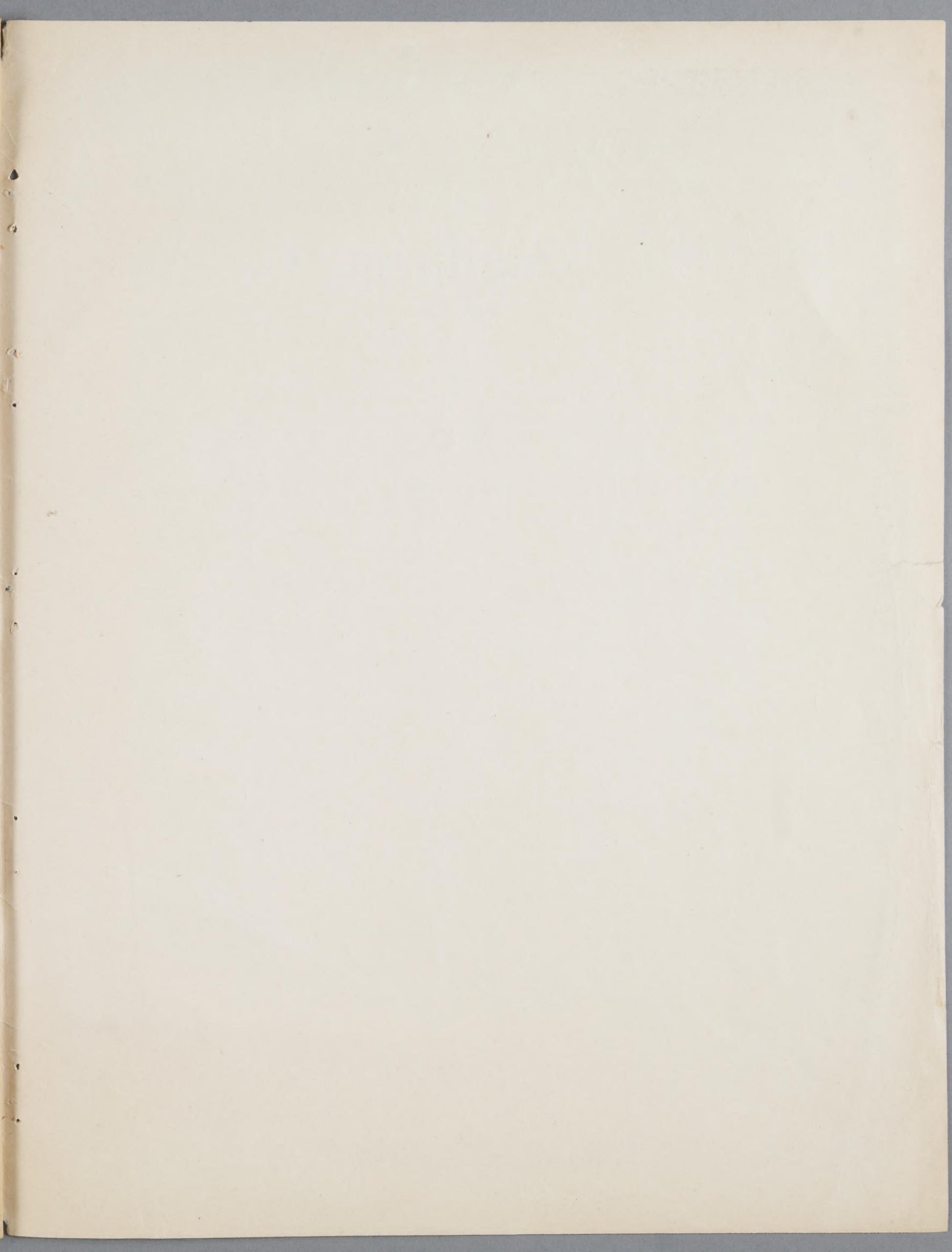
Lottie E. (Rahway, N. J.).—The best way to clean a mirror is to wet the surface of the glass with gin to remove the stains. Then rub with a cloth dipped in powdered blue. Polish with a silk handkerchief. Be very careful not to touch the frames. Very soft paper is better than cloth.

H. R. P. (Portland, Ore.).—The Hollanders use for the preservation of their sluices and floodgates, drawbridges and other huge beams of timber exposed to the sun and constant changes of the atmosphere, a mixture of pitch and tar, upon which they strew small pieces of shell, broken finely—almost to a powder—and mixed with sea-sand and the scales of iron, small and sifted, which incrusts and preserves it effectually.

P. S. E. (Rahway, N. J.).—The ingredients for French polishing are as follows: One pint of spirits of wine, quarter of an ounce of gum copal, quarter of an ounce of gum arabic, and one ounce of shellac. Bruise the gums and sift them through a piece of muslin. Place the spirits and the gums together in a vessel closely corked, place them near a warm stove, and frequently shake them. In two or three days they will be dissolved. Strain through a piece of muslin, and keep it corked tight.

J. C. (New York).—No, there is not much hope of you receiving the letter the post office authorities notified you to call for eight years ago. Letters which do not contain valuable inclosures are destroyed and no record is kept, but inclosures of money or other valuables in letters or packages are carefully recorded; articles besides money are sold at auction; the amounts thus realized are then treated as money inclosures and duly recorded. Such money is subject to reclamation by owners on submission of proper proof for four years; if then unclaimed it is turned into the United States Treasury.

T. E. (Jackson, Mich.).—The essential points in rowing are: (1) to straighten the arms before bending the body forward; (2) to drop the oar cleanly into the water; (3) to draw it straight through at the same depth; (4) to feather neatly and without bringing the oar out before doing so; (5) to use the back and shoulders freely, keeping the arms as straight as possible; (6) to keep the eyes fixed upon the rower before you, avoiding looking at the water, by which means the body is almost sure to swing backward and forward in a straight line. The great object is for all to lay hold of the water at the same time, and pull their oars through it and out at the same moment.



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How a band of crooks plan to rob a bank. How Old Broadbrim "shadows a shadow," learns their plot and foils them.

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A rascally gang of sharps who made it their business to sell gold bricks, and incidentally fleece rich young New Yorkers, meet with a surprise that lasts for them during terms in State's prison. Old Broadbrim does it, of course. If you want to know how, read the story.

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Adventures both on land and in the water in the vicinity of Harlem, are told in this story. The old Quaker finishes at the top of the heap, but he has a tough struggle.

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An abducted heiress. The work of a well-organized gang. There was a problem for Old Broadbrim. Did he solve it? Well—you had better read the story. The Tramping King of Ireland is a prize-winner among the ranks of the hoboes. There is a mystery about him that you will want to see solved.

No. 14.—**Old Broadbrim Fighting Western Desperadoes; or, Playing a Counterfeit Game.**

A monopoly on crime. Sounds peculiar, doesn't it? That's what a certain gang out West had in the district in which it operated. When Old Broadbrim struck that part of the country there were hot times for some of the members of the gang. The old Quaker did some clever work with counterfeit money. Don't miss this story.

No. 15.—**Old Broadbrim Forcing Their Hands; or, The Panel Thieves of the Tenderloin.**

Do you know what the panel game is? There were two or three young college men who came to New York some time ago, who know all about it now, although they had never heard of it before they came to town. One of them told Old Broadbrim his experiences in the city. As a result, there was a series of hair-raising adventures for the lively old Quaker, and a grand wipe out of a big band of men and women, who are now serving terms in State's prison.

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